

Extremist risk assessments

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CREST

Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats



Extremism Risk Assessment: A Directory

FULL REPORT

MARCH 2019

Monica Lloyd

EXTREMISM RISK ASSESSMENT: A DIRECTORY

FULL REPORT

Monica Lloyd, University of Birmingham

This directory has been assembled from those frameworks that have been developed in recent years to assess aspects of extremist violence, a broad term used here to encompass terrorist violence that is framed by ideology and targeted violence that is framed by idiosyncratic beliefs. A further framework concerned with group based violence is included because of its potential relevance to group actor terrorist offending. For each of these the originators completed their own entry and consented to its publication, providing contact details for further enquiry.

About CREST

The Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats (CREST) is a national hub for understanding, countering and mitigating security threats. It is an independent centre, commissioned by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and funded in part by the UK security and intelligence agencies (ESRC Award: ES/N009614/1).
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INTRODUCTION

This directory has been assembled from those frameworks that have been developed in recent years to assess aspects of extremist violence, a broad term used here to encompass terrorist violence that is framed by ideology and targeted violence that is framed by idiosyncratic beliefs. A further framework concerned with group based violence is included because of its potential relevance to group actor terrorist offending. For each of these the originators completed their own entry and consented to its publication, providing contact details for further enquiry.

Each of these frameworks was developed in a slightly different context, and optimised for a different purpose and group of users; the first three to assess those already convicted of terrorist offences or group based violence that are direct assessments that incorporate to some extent the offender's own account of their offending, and the others to assess the risk of a possible first terrorist attack or act of targeted violence against a named individual or group that operate as indirect assessments carried out without the direct input of the subject of concern. These all conform, to a greater or lesser extent, to an approach that structures professional judgment from a number of potential indicators of risk derived from clinical and correctional research and practice, with the exception of the IVP that consists of a checklist for the assessment of escalating behaviours that open source research suggests correspond with more serious intent and/or imminence of attack. The ERG22+ and the TRAP-18 both provide some risk indicators that are more theorised in that they are concerned to explain the individual needs that are met by engagement in ideology or in an idiosyncratic belief system, thereby providing clinical information to guide intervention to reduce or manage that risk. The VERA (forerunner of the VERA-2R) and the SRG (forerunner of the ERG22+) were developed initially to assess the risk of re-offending in those already convicted of terrorist offences. The original VERA derived its risk factors from the terrorist literature, evidenced from open source case studies and feedback obtained from terrorism experts, national security

and law enforcement analysts. The ERG also derived its risk factors from the literature, validated against the accounts of terrorist offenders themselves and of the probation officers working with them. The MLG was designed to assess an individual's risk for group-based violence, including terrorism, and derives its risk factors from the literature on group violence and from feedback obtained from experienced threat assessment analysts. It is therefore confined to use with group actors and the authors recommend that it is deployed alongside other tools for the assessment of terrorist offending. At the opposite pole, the TRAP-18 was developed specifically with lone actors in mind, though it has been found to have utility also with group actors.¹ All the other frameworks were developed for use with both group and lone actors.

Of those designed specifically to assess the risk of a first offence, the TRAP-18 was derived from research into lone actor targeted violence in the USA that included assassinations, stalking, school shootings, work place violence and other idiosyncratic single issues, including lone actor terrorist violence.² It includes a set of proximal factors that are intended to act as warning factors, and a set of more theorised distal factors designed to capture the perpetrator's underlying motivational influences. The IR-46 was developed to identify individuals in the community at risk of carrying out an Islamist terrorist attack and does not purport to be suitable for other ideological groups. The IVP was developed in the UK to assist in the identification of those in the community about whom there may be radicalisation concerns and although it claims to be 'ideologically neutral'³ six of its 16 indicators apply specifically to Islamist extremism. It is derived from the terrorist literature and analysis of open source 'empirical events', and the IR-46 was developed by psychologists in the Netherlands working with the Dutch National Police and was derived from the terrorist literature, closed source Islamist case studies and consultation with intelligence analysts. Both have a set of 'red flag' indicators that are associated with advanced terrorist plotting that are intended to trigger action by law enforcement.

¹ Meloy, J.R., Roshdi, K., Glaz-Ocik, J. & Hoffmann, J. (2015). *Investigating the individual terrorist in Europe*. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management* 2: 140-152.

² Meloy, J. R. (2011). *Violent true believers*. *FBI law enforcement bulletin*, 80, 24-32.

³ Egan, V., Cole, J., Cole, B., Alison, L., Alison, E., Waring, S. & Elntib, S. (2016) *Can you identify violent extremists using a screening checklist and open-source intelligence alone?* *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, 3 (1):26

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Broadly speaking these six frameworks vary to the extent that they focus on engagement in ideology, indicators of violent intent, and/or terrorist capability, which in turn depends on the stage in the terrorist trajectory for which they were developed. Those concerned with preventing radicalisation focus more on the process of engagement and the individual pathway vulnerabilities associated with this. Those concerned with identifying individuals with an active terrorist intent are more concerned with evidence of attack planning, the changes in thinking and behaviour that accompany an intent to cause harm, and evidence of terrorist capability. This threshold is an important one for counter-terrorist purposes. In the UK both MI5, charged with intelligence analysis, and the counter-terrorist police within the government Prevent strategy, independently assess the threat of extremist violence either side of this threshold; the former for 'Pursue' purposes and the latter for 'Prevent' purposes, though the endeavour is very similar. Risk assessment therefore remains core to much of the counter-terrorist effort of intelligence agencies and policing in the UK, and it is hoped that this directory will contribute to the recent recommendation for "a refreshed approach to research and innovation, including academic, private sector and international partners."⁴

None of these frameworks claim to be able to straightforwardly predict future violence. In accordance with good practice in risk assessment, most claim instead to be able to identify behaviours or scenarios that signal when and in what circumstances an attack is more likely, in order to inform efforts to prevent it through appropriate action. Each is presented as work in progress, within a standard template that allows for some comparison across frameworks. The originators of each framework completed their own sections 1 to 5, except for the ERG, which was completed by HMPPS as the copyright holder. For this reason they vary a little in terms of style, content and detail. A final section 6 addresses the strengths and limitations of each framework. These were completed not by the originators but by other risk assessment experts who were also in some cases experienced users, though the originators have also had sight of them and been invited to comment. Each section 6 therefore also varies

somewhat in focus and style as they are the product of different expert reviewers. Section 6 should therefore only be read as the output of a sample of expert peer reviewer opinion. As the evidence base develops and more studies are published, and as more frameworks come on stream or are placed in the public domain, the entries and peer reviews can be updated.

GOOD PRACTICE

Although psychologists have been assessing violent patients or prisoners for their risk of re-offending for many years, the task of assessing the risk of individuals carrying out a first act of violence in the community is a more recent endeavour that is altogether more difficult, as most approaches are predicated on the understanding that past behaviour is the best predictor of future behaviour. Without evidence of past violence, such assessments are informed either by intelligence that an individual is connected to a terrorist network, possibly engaged in an extremist ideology and/or potentially involved in terrorist plotting, or is nursing an idiosyncratic grievance and possibly making targeted threats of harm that may or may not be seriously intended. More worryingly, they may not be declaring intent at all, at least not publicly, thereby successfully remaining under the radar and preserving the element of surprise. Judgments need to be made about whether the threat is real, what form it might take and how imminent it may be, based on what is often incomplete information from indirect sources, without the opportunity to interview the individual concerned. Making assessments in such circumstances can also raise ethical issues for practitioner psychologists for whom requests for assessment before an offence has been committed may not be considered legitimate within the boundaries of their code of conduct and ethics. Guidance has recently been published by the British Psychological Society that addresses the ethical challenges of working with extremist violence,⁵ and that have been highlighted by the UK Prevent duty.⁶

The development of frameworks to assess extremist violence has taken place against a backdrop of

⁴ See David Anderson QC's report: *Attacks in London and Manchester March-June 2017*.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664682/Attacks_in_London_and_Manchester_Open_Report.pdf, 3.47f

⁵ <https://www.bps.org.uk/news-and-policy/ethical-guidelines-applied-psychological-practice-field-extremism-violent-extremism>

⁶ Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on public bodies to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism"

academic research into the methodology of violence risk assessment in general that has lost confidence in ‘non-discretionary’ actuarial approaches that attempt to place an individual in a low, medium or high risk category on the basis of their conformity to a fixed offender profile. Such approaches have lost currency for all forms of violence,⁷ and especially for targeted and terrorist violence.^{8 9} They assume that dangerousness resides within the individual, is fixed, either present or not, and can be measured by summing risk factors; whereas for all forms of violence, dangerousness is now viewed as an emerging construct that is the product of an interaction between push and pull factors in the individual case, within a particular familial, social, cultural and/or political context, and in the absence of protective factors.

The ‘discretionary’ approach of Structured Professional Judgment (SPJ) is now recognised universally as good assessment practice.^{10 11} It provides guidance to practitioners to structure their judgments of risk by means of a scaffold of key indicators, often grouped into broader domains that can demonstrate a link (theoretical and/or empirical) with the violence to be prevented. It produces a holistic assessment that integrates the information available from a range of sources that has become central to an interagency process of information exchange that informs risk management, in both treatment settings and in threat assessment. It allows practitioners to bridge gaps in the knowledge base and is applied within a cycle of referral, prioritisation, further investigation, information sharing and formulation, followed by more or less active intervention and/or management. In treatment settings it includes direct interview with, and ideally the collaboration of the perpetrator; in a

threat assessment context, face to face contact with the individual threatening violence is rare, and more emphasis is placed on intelligence, risk factors, warning behaviours, stressors, and possible precipitating events and mitigators.¹² In a fast moving threat scenario there are many gaps to be bridged and timely decisions to be made about whether to investigate further, monitor events or intervene to actively manage the risk, or effect an arrest.

SPJ frameworks are now available for a range of violent offending and have been recommended for use with extremist violence.^{13 14 15} It should be acknowledged that there is a continuum of SPJ approaches from the fully operationalised that require scenario planning and formulation, to leaner approaches that support an appraisal of the pattern of risk (and protective) factors in the individual case to inform a summary risk rating of high, medium, or low. It is generally understood that the more complete approach is the preserve of professionals such as psychologists, behavioural scientists or probation officers, and that the leaner approach is more suited to those with operational expertise and experience. These two approaches have been characterised in the literature as SPJ full-fat and SPJ lite.¹⁶ The originators of the frameworks featured here all claim that their framework conforms to some extent with this approach, in that risk (and ideally protective) factors are formulated into an overall risk judgment that informs proportionate risk monitoring pre-crime, or appropriate risk management post crime. It is probably true to say that some were deliberately designed to conform to this approach, and that others have migrated towards it following revisions. The IVP was originally developed as a checklist-based screening instrument but has been re-badged an SPJ framework

7 Hart, S.D., & Cooke, D.J., (2013). Another look at the (im)precision of individual risk estimates made using actuarial risk assessment instruments. *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*, 31, 81-102.

8 Borum, R., (2015). Assessing risk for terrorism involvement. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, 2, 63-87.

9 Borum, R., Fein, R., Vossekuil, B., & Berglund, J. (1999). *Threat assessment: Defining an approach for evaluating risk of targeted violence*. *Behavioral Sciences & The Law*, 17 (3), 323-337.

10 Hart, S.D. & Logan, C. (2011). *Formulation of violence risk using evidence based assessments: The Structured Professional Judgment approach*. In P. Sturmey & M. McMurrin (Eds.), *Forensic case formulation* (pp. 83-106). Chichester, UK: Wiley Blackwell.

11 Logan, C & Lloyd, M (2018). *Violent extremism: A comparison of approaches to assessing and managing risk*. *Legal & Criminological Psychology*. DOI: 10.1111/lcrp.12140, p.3

12 U.S Department of Justice FBI. *Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing, and Managing the Threat of Targeted Attacks*. Behavioral Analysis Unit – National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime.

13 Skeem, J.L. & Monahan, J. (2011). *Current Directions in Violence Risk Assessment*. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 20(1), 38-42, doi.org/10.1177/0963721410397271

14 Monahan, J. (2015). *The individual risk assessment of terrorism: Recent developments*. *Virginia Public Law and Legal Theory Research Paper*, 57, 520–534. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2665815>

15 Sarma, K. M. (2017). Risk assessment and the prevention of radicalization from nonviolence into terrorism. *American Psychologist*, 72(3), 278-288. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/amp0000121>

16 See footnote 10, p.7

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in the directory since the 2006 study of its utility that suggested that gaps in information needed to be bridged by a human led assessment of the case.¹⁷ Similarly in 2015 the TRAP-18 was labelled an investigative template,¹⁸ but has since been re-badged an SPJ framework in the directory as its function has evolved.

This approach allows assessors to make both common sense and theoretical sense of the function of the extremist identity, ideology and/or violence to the individual, rather than assessing their degree of conformity to a fixed terrorist profile that research has confirmed does not exist.¹⁹ Hart (2009) has stated, in the context of sexual violence, that an assessment approach should be judged “to the extent that it coheres with the facts of the case, common sense views of the world, and (where applicable) scientific research and theory.”²⁰ Meloy also makes it explicit in his description of the TRAP-18 that his aim is to identify the pattern that emerges from the constellation of warning behaviours as a Gestalt which the clinician constructs from experience, stressing the importance of clinical insight (see TRAP-18 entry). Such factors should also be ‘dynamic, iterative, and responsive to change’.²¹ An important feature of the SPJ approach that requires more clarity is the precise role of protective factors, which are variously referred to in the different framework entries.²² Only the VERA-2R explicitly lists six protective and risk-mitigating factors, which are essentially the reverse of six key risk factors. Meloy asserts in the entry for the TRAP-18 that “the absence of certain indicators, both proximal warning behaviours and distal characteristics are protective” but this is far from established. A recent paper by Warren et al (2018) proposes a new theoretical model to explain attacks perpetrated by radicalised civilians that incorporates risk and protective factors as the end points of the same continuum, individualised to capture the particular protective influences that bear on particular risk factors to more precisely inform individual risk analysis and management. There is more work to be done to achieve a consensus about the precise mechanism of the protective function.

Our task therefore in evaluating these frameworks is to ensure that they allow the assessor to formulate the individual case by identifying the factors that motivate and incentivise engagement, and the potentially idiosyncratic influences that protect against it. These drivers should be aspects of the individual that provide common sense explanations for the adoption of an extremist identity, ideology or terrorist intention, that also make theoretical sense, and that allow for the possibility of a different life choice in the future.

VALIDATION

The frameworks presented here all represent work in progress and none are yet fully validated. This is a task that presents multiple challenges, particularly for violent extremism for which the evidence base is thin, perpetrators few in number though disproportionately damaging, the social and political context complex, and the range of agencies and practitioners involved significant, each with different skills, approaches and priorities. Assuming sufficient relevant information to inform the assessment, the validity of a risk assessment framework is determined by how reliably it performs and whether the identified factors are actually causal and therefore valid indicators of risk (criminogenic). The assessment framework should structure and guide the assessor’s task, so that close agreement can be achieved by different assessors working independently of each other with the same information. Reliability is commonly established through inter-rater reliability studies, and these are cited in the directory where available.

The validity of SPJ frameworks cannot be established as in conventional psychometric scales by internal analysis of the contribution that each item makes to a total score that measures a unitary construct such as intelligence or neuroticism that can be independently evidenced. There is no such thing as a propensity to terrorism that can be measured by means of a single scale, and the factors within SPJ domains

17 Egan, V., Cole, J., Cole, B., Alison, L., Alison, E., Waring, S. & Elnitib, S. (2016) *Can you identify violent extremists using a screening checklist and open-source intelligence alone?* *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, 3 (1). pp. 21-36.

18 Meloy, J. R., Roshdi, K., Glaz-Ocik, J., & Hoffmann, J. (2015). *Investigating the individual terrorist in Europe*. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, 2, 140–152.

19 See footnote 7

20 Hart, S. (2009). *Evidence-based assessment of risk for sexual violence*. *Chapman Journal of Criminal Justice*. 1, 143-165. p.160.

21 www.RMAScotland.gov.uk/FRAME, Principle 11.

22 Warren, J.I., Leviton, A.C.R., Reed, J., Saathoff, G.B., Patterson, T.D., Richards, L.A., & Fancher, A.D. (2018) *Operationalizing Theory: A Moral Situational Action Model for Extremist Violence*. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*. V. 5, No. 4.205-226.

apply differentially to different terrorist roles and personalities. They broadly identify the range of push and pull factors and personal vulnerabilities that have been identified in the literature, and rely on professional judgment for a formulation of what particular combination of risk and/or needs apply to the individual being assessed, and what protective influences might mitigate that risk. A recent study systematically reviewed 148 studies from peer reviewed journals that identified empirical factors that predicted radicalisation and classified them as push factors, pull factors or personal factors.²³ Although there was a broad convergence of findings, only 19 (12%) used a control group and only one used a matched control group of non-violent extremists. Access to terrorists and matched controls is difficult to achieve in the real world but remains a gold standard for confirming that proposed risk factors are actually valid indicators of risk and are not also present in radicals with no terrorist intent.

The single study referred to above compared open source Al Qaeda influenced terrorist case studies from Canada and Europe with 28 Radicals, all of whom were associates of a terrorist in the sample but who had not engaged in terrorist violence themselves, twenty of whom were interviewed as a matched control group.²⁴ Both groups shared a grievance towards the West, support for a Caliphate and for defensive violence, but the terrorists held strident beliefs in their supremacy and the inferiority of the West, lacked critical thinking and made a deliberate decision to reject their host society and embrace a romantic notion of restoring their honour through violence. Protective factors were good role models growing up, in-depth understanding of Islam, respect for their host society and openness to new learning.

Two recent studies compared by means of the TRAP-18, groups with and without violent intent. The first compared thirty 'sovereign citizens' who planned or

executed violent offences with 29 who carried out non-violent offences.²⁵ Six of the proximal factors and four of the distal factors significantly discriminated between them, and the total score was able to correctly predict 76% of the violent offenders. Examination of these indicates that 'last resort behaviours', 'pathway planning behaviours' and 'identification with a commando identity' were powerful proximal predictors and 'personal grievance, framed by ideology' and 'criminal violence' were powerful distal predictors. The second study compared 33 lethal lone actor terrorists with 23 subjects of concern who lacked clear intent or were successfully diverted from this intention and their cases closed. Five proximal and four distal factors significantly discriminated between them. The same 'last resort behaviours', 'pathway planning/preparation behaviours' and 'identification as an agent or soldier for a cause' emerged as powerful correlates, with the addition of 'energy burst' and the absence of a 'directly communicated threat'. Among the distal factors 'ideological framing', 'changes in thinking and behaviour', 'creativity and innovation' and the absence of 'mental disorder' were all significant correlates. The configuration indicates that every attacker had at least one proximal warning behaviour and most of the distal characteristics were present in the majority of the attackers and nonattackers, confirming the utility of the approach that recommends that the presence of any one proximal characteristic should be followed by active management of the case while the presence of only distal characteristics should result in active monitoring of the case.

Other 'known outcome' studies exploring the performance of the TRAP-18 indicators retrospectively with actual cases reveal that nine attackers with more lethal intent had a greater psychopathology than 5 with less lethal intent;²⁶ nine school shooters showed a pattern of warning behaviours that 31 empty threateners did not;²⁷ 15 lone actor terrorists and 7 group actor terrorists shared 6 of the 8 warning

23 Vergani, M., Iqbal, M., Ilbahar, E., Barton, G. (2018). *The Three Ps of Radicalization: Push, Pull and Personal. A Systematic Scoping Review of the Scientific Evidence about Radicalization Into Violent Extremism. Studies in Conflict & Terrorism.* <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2018.1505686>

24 Bartlett, J. & Miller, C. (2012). *The Edge of Violence: Towards Telling the Difference Between Violent and Non-Violent Radicalization. Terrorism and Political Violence.* V.24, Iss.1.

25 Challacombe, D.J. & Lucas, P.A., (2018) *Postdicting Violence in Sovereign Citizen Actors. An exploratory test of the TRAP-18. Journal of Threat Assessment and Management.* Dec 2018.

26 Hoffmann, J., Meloy, J.R., Guldemann, A. & Ermer, A. (2011). *Attacks on German public figures, 1968-2004: Warning behaviors, potentially lethal and nonlethal acts, psychiatric status, and motivations. Behavioral Sciences and the Law,* 29, 155-179.

27 Meloy, J.R., Hoffmann, J., Roshdi, K. & Guldemann, A. (2014). *Some warning behaviors discriminate between school shooters and other students of concern. Journal of Threat Assessment and Management* 1: 203-211.

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behaviours with the exception of direct threats that were not made by group actors. There was significant similarity between them in terms of grievance framed by ideology, and changes in thinking and emotion, but more lone actors than group actors showed evidence of psychopathology;²⁸ (Meloy et al, 2015); 70% of 111 lone actor terrorists, including Islamist, Far Right and single-issue terrorists shared at least half or more of the indicators, suggesting more commonality than difference between them.²⁹

Such studies touch on another aspect of SPJ frameworks that bears on their coherence and validity: the extent to which the risk factors are theorised and able to provide a degree of explanation for the individual's extremist behaviour. In this respect a distinction may be made between risk factors that are intrinsically indicative of risk such as Direct threats, Leakage of an intent to do harm (TRAP-18), or Planning or preparing for a terrorist attack (VERA-2R), and those whose link with risk is less direct but potentially more explanatory, such as 'Changes in thinking or emotion' (TRAP-18) or 'Over-identification with group, cause or ideology' (the ERG22+). To the extent that a factor directly communicates violent intent it does not need a theoretical explanation for its role, but where a factor is not a direct indicator of harm, then some explanation for its role is necessary. Such a factor needs to make both psychological sense, and be able to demonstrate a direct functional link with the adoption of extremist identity/ideology, or the development of attitudes and behaviour that are consistent with terrorist intent. Such explanations add value to the assessment in helping to explain the individual's motivations, inform subsequent intervention and risk management options, and contribute to the framework's evidence base.³⁰

Postdictive studies such as that with sovereign citizens above have been recommended to test the performance of a framework retrospectively with known outcome case studies,³¹ providing a measure of their criterion or concurrent validity, as well as a means of comparing the profile of different ideological groups of those either side of the threshold of violence as above. The main barriers to the efficacy of such studies are

the influence of confirmatory or hindsight bias in judging whether an indicator is evidenced or not, and of the self-fulfilling function of indicators that are elements of the behaviour that is to be predicted, effectively confounding independent and dependent variables. Several postdictive studies have been carried out with the TRAP-18 that are vulnerable to such criticism. However, the application of the TRAP-18 in postdictive research as above has also produced new learning where studies have contrasted targeted violence with more or less lethal intent, lone actors and group actors and different ideological groups on the TRAP-18 indicators. They have shown, for example, that more lone actor than group actor terrorists show evidence of psychopathology; that greater lethality is correlated with greater psychopathology, and that those threatening targeted violence often issue direct threats, whereas terrorists do not.

Most of the frameworks included in this directory claim to be suitable for all extremist ideologies, with the explicit exception of the IR-46, whose originators are currently developing alternative frameworks for Far Right and Extreme Left Wing groups. More research is needed to clarify commonalities and differences. Concurrent validity was found between the overall summary risk ratings for the MLG Version 2 and the HCR-20 by the authors of the MLG, confirming that those at risk for terrorist violence are also at risk for general violence, though this finding does not imply that anyone judged to be at risk for general violence is also at risk for terrorist violence. The MLG Individual and Individual-Group domains were found to overlap significantly with the VERA2, whereas Group and Group-Society domains overlapped very little, confirming that the two frameworks measure different aspects of group based violence (see MLG entry). These differences are important; identifying which frameworks work best for which client group and in what circumstances, and deploying them appropriately is part of the expertise of risk assessment that advances with the benefit of such findings.

It is hoped that with the publication of this directory, risk assessment practitioners, intelligence analysts and

28 Meloy, J.R., Roshdi, K., Glaz-Ocik, J. & Hoffmann, J. (2015). Investigating the individual terrorist in Europe. *Journal of Threat Assess Management* 2: 140-152.

29 Meloy, J.R. & Gill, P. (2016). The lone actor terrorist and the TRAP-18. *J of Threat Assessment and Management* 3: 37-52.

30 See footnote 10, (p.11)

31 Monahan, J. (2012). The individual risk assessment of terrorism. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, 18, 167–205. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0025792>

the academic research community will be able to access more of the tools available for assessing ideologically motivated targeted and/or group based violence, and be inspired to approach the authors or copyright owners directly for permission to use them, or for training. Cooperative research is needed to build evidence for their reliability, validity and utility, to carry out more matched controlled studies, to test frameworks against known outcome case studies, and contribute to the knowledge base that will accrue from their use. More clarity about what discriminates between targeted violence and terrorist attacks, between lone and group actors, and between different ideological groups is needed. This directory is intended to contribute to this work in progress.

EXTREMISM RISK GUIDANCE (ERG22+)

1. PROVENANCE

1.1 ORIGINATING AUTHORS, PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION, ROLE AND CONTEXT

HMPPS developed and owns the intellectual property of the ERG. HMPPS is responsible for training and registration of assessors, as well as its ongoing development and adaptation in line with evolving HMPPS population requirements and emerging literature and research.

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1.2 BACKGROUND AND PROVENANCE

The Extremism Risk Guidance (ERG) is best described as a Structured Professional Judgment tool (SPJ); a formulation guided assessment of risk and need. When the development of what we now know as the ERG began, there were no known established methodologies for assessing risk and need amongst extremist offenders, and with the increasing number of individuals being convicted of extremist offences, and developing legislation (e.g., Terrorism Act 2006), an assessment was required that could provide an empirically-informed systematic and transparent approach to assessing risk and need amongst convicted extremists.

The ERG was informed by the international terrorist literature, from casework with up to 50 convicted terrorist offenders, and from a comparative analysis of the criminogenic profiles of extremist offenders compared to mainstream criminal offenders from OASys (Offender Assessment System) group data.

Casework findings were cross-referenced against independent research into the radicalising influences in the backgrounds of 12 extremist offenders on license in the community.³² These findings were reviewed by an advisory panel of experts in the field who suggested a case formulation approach based on functional analysis of the individual's offending, to identify the factors relevant to involvement in extremism and to extremist offending, to inform a structured professional judgment framework (Lloyd & Dean, 2015).

1.3 DATE OF FIRST PUBLICATION OR ORIGIN AND SCOPE OF USE

The ERG manual is an internal publication. *Extremism Risk Guidance. ERG22+ Structured Professional Guidelines for Assessing Risk of Extremist Offending*. Offender Services & Implementation Group. NOMS (2011).

1.4 HAS THE FRAMEWORK BEEN PEER REVIEWED?

During the development of the ERG, an independent process evaluation of the first version, the Structured Risk Guidance (SRG³³) was conducted by the National Centre for Social Research, which focused on its content, delivery and implementation (Webster et al., 2017).

This evaluation, along with the feedback from an exercise with 35 probation officers with experience of extremist offenders, led to further review and development of the framework and the introduction of a three dimensional model.

The expert advisory group continued to oversee this work as it developed. The final version of the ERG was peer-reviewed within HMPPS and externally by two of the experts from the advisory group. The ERG22+ as

³² Karmani, A (2009). *Reducing the influences that Radicalise Prisoners*. London Probation Trust. Unpublished internal report.

³³ A Process Evaluation of the Structured Risk Guidance for Extremist Offenders. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/661787/process-evaluation-srg-extremist-offender-report.pdf

it stands today was mainstreamed across Prisons and Probation by HMPPS in 2011.

1.5 AIMS OF THE FRAMEWORK

The ERG aims to:

- Assess the extent to which an individual is engaged or committed to an extremist group, cause or ideology, and is motivated to offend on their behalf.
- Assess the extent to which an individual holds a current readiness or intention to offend.
- Assess the extent to which an individual is capable of, or has the resources to carry out a further extremist offence (particularly acts of terrorism which cause serious and significant harm).
- Inform judgments about their likelihood of contributing to, or committing a future extremist offence.
- Inform sentence planning, including recommending any interventions or other strategies that may be appropriate to manage an individual's risk, and support them in moving on with their lives without offending.

1.6 DESCRIPTION OF APPROACH

The ERG is an SPJ tool, a formulation guided assessment of risk and need. Assessors are asked to consider the 22+ factors, and record and evidence those significant to an individual's pathway into extremism (i.e., engagement), how they overcame inhibitions against offending and/or harming others (i.e., intent) and their ability to contribute to, or commit a further extremist offence (i.e., capability). Assessors are then asked, based on their formulation to comment on the individual's risk and need, what might protect against further offending, and make recommendations to facilitate desistance and support disengagement from extremist ideology.

The ERG is not an actuarial measure. It was not designed to determine guilt, or to predict whether an individual will reoffend; it was designed to be used as part of multidisciplinary decision-making process to inform proportionate risk management, to increase understanding and confidence in front-line staff and in

decision-makers working with extremist offenders, and to facilitate effective and targeted intervention (Lloyd & Dean, 2015).

1.7 TARGET POPULATION

All individuals in England and Wales convicted of an extremist offence (under terrorism and in some cases, other legislation where the offence is clearly extremist in nature) are subject to an ERG assessment; generally, within the first twelve months of sentence. In some cases, individuals for whom there is significant concern regarding possible involvement in extremism but who were convicted of an offence unrelated to extremism may be subject to an ERG.

1.8 FOCUS OF THE ASSESSMENT

The ERG focuses on the individual, but it also identifies the role of factors and circumstances external to the individual that may have influenced their engagement and/or involvement in extremism. Consideration needs to be given to the group, cause or ideology that is being supported, the individual motivations and protective and contextual factors, as well as their role within the extremist activity.

1.9 DIRECT OR INDIRECT ASSESSMENT?

When undertaking the assessment assessors are encouraged to work responsively with the individual to create a collaborative assessment that allows them to provide their own account and insights, to create an understanding and formulation of their pathway into extremist offending and assess the risk of further offending. Assessors are also encouraged to use as many sources of information as possible in its completion.

1.10 GENERIC OR SPECIFIC TO IDEOLOGY?

Generic. Those identified by HMPPS as extremist offenders include anyone convicted under terrorist legislation or anyone whose offending is allied to an extremist ideology that justifies violence or illegal conduct in pursuit of its objectives. This includes far

right, animal rights activists or others pursuing single issues.

1.11 THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

The **ERG** is grounded in a number of mainstream psychological theories and incorporates amongst others, the following key theories and concepts:

- Ajzen & Fishbein's theory of reasoned action.³⁴
- Suedfeld's theory of cognitive integrative complexity.³⁵
- Altemeyer's findings concerning authoritarian dominance and authoritarian submission.³⁶
- Tajfel & Turner's Social identity Theory of Inter-Group Behaviour.³⁷
- Schwartz et al's Identity Theory of Terrorism.³⁸
- Bjorgo & Horgan's model of push/pull factors in engagement and disengagement.³⁹
- Horgan's characterisation of 'socialisation into terrorism'.⁴⁰
- McCauley & Segal's observation on the dynamic nature of engagement and disengagement.⁴¹
- Ward's Good Lives Model.⁴²

2. STRUCTURE

2.1 AN OUTLINE OF THE STRUCTURE

The ERG is three dimensional in its structure. The dimensions 'engagement' and 'intent' seek to measure the longitudinal journey of an individual taking into account a number of factors which unfold in interaction with one another in different degrees and sequences across a number of developing pathways. The third

dimension, 'capability' serves a different function in the formulation, essentially looking at the operational capacity to cause harm.

Within the ERG, engagement is defined as a process by which an individual becomes interested in, involved in, committed to, and/or identified with an extremist group, cause and/or ideology (NOMS, 2011^a). This process is often referred to elsewhere in the literature as radicalisation. The factors within the engagement dimension include for example, need to redress injustice, need for identity, meaning and belonging, need for status, susceptibility to indoctrination, need to dominate others, political/moral motivation, transitional periods, the influence of family and/or friends, opportunistic involvement and mental health.

The term 'intent' refers to the mind-set associated with a readiness to act illegally and/or violently on behalf of a group, cause and/or ideology. The intent dimension is best described as the end point of an engagement process if uninterrupted, and includes for example, over-identification (as an end state of engagement and identification), us and them thinking, dehumanisation (as an end state of us and them thinking), and harmful objectives; all of which represent a state of mind where inhibitions against offending and causing harm have been overcome. It is this dimension which bears most heavily on risk.

The third dimension 'capability' seeks to measure an offender's abilities to carry out an act of terrorism and/or cause serious harm (NOMS, 2011^a). Capability is a mixture of static, dynamic, risk-neutral and risk-specific variables, and is an operational rather than a clinical indicator. The capability dimension includes factors such as skills, competencies, networks, resources and criminal history, all of which act as enabling factors (NOMS, 2011^a).

³⁴ Ajzen, I., & Fishbein, M. (2005). *The influence of attitudes on behavior*. In Albarracín, D., Johnson, B.T., Zanna, M.P. (Eds.) *The Handbook of Attitudes*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

³⁵ Suedfeld, P. (2010). *The Cognitive Processing of Politics and Politicians: Archival Studies of Conceptual and Integrative Complexity*. *Journal of Personality*, 78(6), 1669-702

³⁶ Altemeyer, B. (2004). *Highly Dominating, Highly Authoritarian Personalities*. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 144(4), 421-447.

³⁷ Tajfel, H & Turner, J (1986) *The Social Identity Theory of Inter-group Behaviour*, in Worchel, S & Austin, W. *The Psychology of Inter-group Behaviour*. Chicago: Nelson-Hall.

³⁸ Schwartz, S J, Dunkel, C S & Waterman, A.S (2009). *Terrorism: An Identity Theory Perspective*. *Studies in International Conflict & Terrorism*. 32:537-559.

³⁹ Bjorgo, T & Horgan, J (Eds.) *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement*. Oxon: Routledge.

⁴⁰ Horgan, J. (2005) *The Psychology of Terrorism*. Routledge.

⁴¹ McCauley, C and Segal, M, 'Terrorist Individuals and Terrorist Groups: The Normal Psychology of Extreme Behaviour' in J Groebel and JH Goldstein (Eds) *Terrorism* (Seville: Publicaciones de la Universidad de Sevilla, 1989. p 45).

⁴² Ward, T. & Stewart, C.A. (2003). *Criminogenic needs and human needs: A theoretical model* *Psychology, Crime and Law*, 9, 125-143.

2.2 ARE PROTECTIVE FACTORS INCLUDED?

Yes. Assessors are asked as part of the ERG to consider alongside the 22+ risk factors, how any of these or additional factors may be mitigated by protective influences, and support an individual's desistance and disengagement from extremism.

2.3 IS THE FRAMEWORK SENSITIVE TO POLITICAL CONTEXT?

Yes. Assessors are asked to pay attention to the political and social context within which an individual becomes involved in extremism and offends (Lloyd & Dean, 2015), and to consider how the static or changing political and social context might impact future risk and need.

2.4 RISK SEEN AS STATIC OR DYNAMIC?

Risk is treated as dynamic; all risk factors within the ERG other than two of the capability factors and arguably some mental health issues are dynamic and susceptible to change.

2.5 TIME-FRAME FOR RISK JUDGMENTS

As a dynamic framework, the ERG assessment has limited longevity and should be reviewed periodically to reflect progress or change, in order to inform risk and sentence management decisions.

2.6 ANY REFERENCE TO IMMINENCE OF HARM?

Not directly, this is not the prime purpose of the ERG. The assessment does however comment on any risk triggers, enabling or disinhibiting influences or circumstances in different scenarios. Where there is a risk of imminent harm, or harm in particular scenarios, this information is fed into processes concerned with the day-to-day risk management of an individual.

2.7 INFORMATION REQUIREMENT

Individuals subject to an ERG are asked to participate in the assessment process, either through interview or in writing. The ERG is completed based on written information when individuals decline participation, but they are still given an opportunity to review the completed ERG. Assessors are encouraged to use as many sources of information as possible, including in some cases, speaking to family. The completed ERG is disclosed to the individual in the context of sentence planning and management.

2.8 IS SCENARIO PLANNING INCLUDED?

Not in the way that other SPJ tools in the field of violence or sexual offending risk assessments instruct scenario planning, but assessors are encouraged in the guidance to use the case formulation in this way.

2.9 ARE THERE ANY RED FLAGS?

No red flags as such but the dimensions of Intent and Capability bear more directly on the risk of extremist offending.

2.10 OUTPUT – RISK BANDING OR LIVE RISK/THREAT MANAGEMENT ADVICE?

The ERG does not propose risk bandings but the formulation is intended to be used to inform risk management.

The assessment includes a narrative explaining those factors significant to an individual's engagement and involvement in extremism, and their offending, a case formulation based on the SPJ guidance, an assessment of risk and need, and recommendations regarding how best to manage risk and target intervention. A record sheet is provided as an 'aide memoir' which assessors may review but do not need to code or score. As stated previously, if there is imminent risk of harm, or risk of harm more generally, there are existing mechanisms within HMPPS into which this information would be inputted.

2.11 IS PRACTICE GUIDANCE PROVIDED?

Yes. Guidance is provided to trained and registered users.

3. TRAINING AND LICENSING

3.1 THE CONTENT OF TRAINING

Two day training:

1. How to use structured professional guidelines to assess risk of extremist offending.
2. A brief history of the ERG; how the structured guidelines were developed, the context in which they were developed, the limitations of the evidence-base and scope for future refinement.
3. The key literature, evidence and theories upon which the structured guidelines have been developed.
4. How the guidelines are intended to be used and reported, including their scope and limitations.
5. The significant risk (and protective), factors and circumstances associated with extremist offending that need to be considered as part of a risk and needs assessment.
6. How to translate analysis of risk/protective factors and circumstances into conclusions about risk, and recommendations to inform decision making e.g., sentence management, interventions, release decisions etc.
7. How such assessments can be effectively reported.
8. Practice with three case studies.

3.2 OPTIMISED TO WHAT KIND OF ASSESSOR(S)?

ESSENTIAL

Chartered and registered psychologists or experienced probation officers required as part of their role to undertake assessments with convicted extremist offenders, and those for whom there are credible concerns about their potential for such offences.

DESIRABLE

Experience in completing psychologically informed risk assessment and formulation.

3.3 LICENSING

Those completing the training are licensed to use the ERG **within HMPPS**. There are both educational licences and commercial licences available. The commercial licence is currently on hold pending a review of the ERG. To date no commercial licences have been issued, however some US Probation Officers were trained in the ERG in 2017, and licences are being issued to them.

4. UTILITY AND ETHICAL PRACTICE

4.1 IS THE FRAMEWORK UNDERSTOOD BY STAKEHOLDERS AND ACCESSIBLE TO THEM?

HMPPS

Operational management: The ERG is well established within security departments that monitor extremist risk in custody.

Sentence management: The ERG is the established means of assessment for extremist offenders that informs prisoner category, sentence planning, interventions, parole decision making and risk management in custody via Pathfinder (the Extremist Risk Screen for assessing prison intelligence), and in the community via MAPPA.

GOVERNMENT

The terminology of the ERG (and in particular reference to the three dimensions) is used throughout Government.

EXTREMIST OFFENDERS

Seen as a respectful non-judgmental approach to assessment that treats them as individuals.

The process of assessment is collaborative and the report shared with offenders and their solicitors.

The approach supports proportionate risk and sentence management; both in custody and whilst in the community under the supervision of the NPS.

4.2 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The following are observed:

- An open, transparent and collaborative approach.
- A focus on the offending as the target for change rather than an individual's beliefs.
- A recognition that engagement is dynamic, and that desistance and disengagement are possible.
- A balanced and objective approach to risk assessment and management that is free from bias and proportionate to assessed risk and need.

5. PUBLICATION HISTORY

5.1 PUBLICATIONS

Lloyd, M. & Dean, C. (2015) The Development of Structured Guidelines for Assessing Risk in Extremist Offenders. *The Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, Vol 2, Issue 1. pp 40-52.

Lloyd, M. (2016) Structured Guidelines for Assessing Risk in Extremist Offenders. *Assessment and Development Matters*, Vol 8, No 2. pp 15-18. British Psychological Society.

Webster, Kerr & Tompkins (2017) A Process Evaluation of the Structured Risk Guidance for Extremist Offenders. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/661787/process-evaluation-srg-extremist-offender-report.pdf

Dean C., Lloyd, M., Keane, C., Powis, B., Randhawa K. (2018) Intervening with Extremist Offenders - A Pilot Study <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/intervening-with-extremist-offenders-a-pilot-study>

5.2 PUBLICATIONS THAT BEAR ON INTER-RATER RELIABILITY

Pending. Study being completed by MOJ.

5.3 PUBLICATIONS THAT BEAR ON VALIDITY

Pending. Study submitted to peer-reviewed journal for publication.

5.4 FOLLOW UP STUDIES USING THE FRAMEWORK

Herzog-Evans, M. (2018) A comparison of two structured professional judgment tools for violent extremism and their relevance in the French context. *European Journal of Probation* 2018, Vol. 10(1) 3–27.

6. SUMMARY & EVALUATION

6.1 STRENGTHS

- Linked to a treatment programme which addresses factors identified in the ERG: the Healthy Identity Intervention (HII).
- Is both empirically informed by one on one casework and a comparative analysis of the criminogenic profiles of extremist offenders and mainstream criminal offenders, and theoretically informed by the international terrorist literature and mainstream psychological theories.
- Provides quality assurance through requiring competence, experience and specialist training in assessors.
- Completed in collaboration with the offender and contains their own insights.
- Informs sentence planning, intervention and release planning for extremist offenders.
- Development overseen by international expert advisory group.
- Independent evaluation of first iteration by National Centre for Social Research (NatCen), UK.
- Peer-reviewed by two members of the advisory group before implementation: Profs Stephen Hart and David Cook.
- Supports the separate assessment of criminogenic needs for intervention purposes (Engagement dimension), and the likelihood of future extremist

EXTREMISM RISK GUIDANCE (ERG22+)

SUMMARY & EVALUATION

offending for risk management purposes (Intent and Capability dimensions).

- Factors are dynamic, with the exception of two of the capability factors and some mental health issues, so the framework is sensitive to change over time.
- A strong ethical focus on the individual rights of the offender and concern not to pathologise extremist beliefs per se but to focus on the potential harm to society, and the rehabilitation and reintegration of the individual.
- Fits the legal framework of the UK that includes terrorist pathway offences that fall short of terrorist violence.
- The basis of the Extremist Risk Screen for those at risk of being drawn into terrorism. Has good face validity and utility with stakeholders, including offenders.
- Has demonstrated utility with extremist offenders including Islamist, Far Right, Far Left, Animal Rights and other single issues, and gang members whose offending is influenced by group processes.
- Allows the inclusion of any additional factor that can be shown to bear on risk or need.
- Training provided and licences available to countries wishing to use the framework.

information could limit the weight that can be placed on the ERG, or aspects of it.

- Remains the intellectual property of HMPPS, not available for casual use.

6.2 LIMITATIONS

- Information on reliability and validity not yet available.
- It has not been established that the factors in the ERG 22+ are either correlates or predictors of risk. Given the low base rate of extremist recidivism it may not be possible to validate their role for some time.
- The ERG was developed on the limited international literature available at the time, and casework which focused on al-Qaeda inspired extremism. Further research and refinement is underway to ensure the ERG remains appropriate and responsive to different types of extremism, and different cohorts e.g., women and young people.
- As with all assessments, the ERG 22+ is dependent upon the accuracy and extent of the information used. Incomplete or unreliable

ISLAMIC RADICALIZATION (IR-46)

1. PROVENANCE

1.1 ORIGINATING AUTHORS, PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION, ROLE AND CONTEXT

Executive project leaders within the KiM-project of the Dutch National Police.

CONTACT EMAIL:

To the attention of the KiM-project

cter.ik-dlr.landelijke-eenheid@politie.nl

1.2 BACKGROUND AND PROVENANCE

Empirical, knowledge based model. Developed from the pathways of known cases, triangulated against the literature and interviews with academic experts and the investigative and intelligence services. A theoretical model was developed and tested on three occasions and on 240 cases in total (of known radicalised Islamist individuals). Extensive analysis of this data underpins the model.

The Dutch National Police is the owner of the approaches developed by the project and responsible for its ongoing development.

1.3 DATE OF FIRST PUBLICATION OR ORIGIN AND SCOPE OF USE.

2009/2010 as internal publications.

2010 Intelligence and Security Informatics (ISI) 'Terrorist threat assessment with formal concept analysis'.

IR-46 has been operational within the Dutch National Police, Royal Constabulary since 2010, but use of the tool was optional for regional police units until January 2015 when its use has been mandatory. Pilots

are being conducted within some of the 'Regional Safety Houses' (multi-disciplinary teams that handle individual cases).

1.4 HAS THE FRAMEWORK BEEN PEER REVIEWED?

A feedback loop is used to continuously evaluate the model and keep it dynamic and up-to-date, by professionals and academics with expertise in terrorism; there is no peer reviewed published article on the instrument.

1.5 AIMS OF THE FRAMEWORK

- To detect and map out signs of radical Islamist behaviour at an early stage
- To determine from their religious experience and/or social circumstances to what extent a person is 'ready' to use violence
- To detect how likely it is that a person would actually be able to carry out an attack.
- To interpret the complex interaction between personality, behaviour and circumstances, since it provides insight into the stage or degree of radicalisation reached.
- To provide an overview of the information available about an individual.

1.6 DESCRIPTION OF APPROACH

IR-46 is based on structured professional judgment (SPJ). An important principle is that the model is not intended to substitute for human interpretation. The model does not replace professional analysis, but helps in formulating judgments.

1.7 TARGET POPULATION

Pre-crime: Islamic Radicalised individuals in the community.

ISLAMIC RADICALIZATION (IR-46)

STRUCTURE

1.8 FOCUS OF THE ASSESSMENT

The degree of radicalisation and extent to which the person sees violence as an acceptable means to 'promote' or realise his/her ideals.

1.9 DIRECT OR INDIRECT ASSESSMENT?

In reality direct assessment is rarely achieved and the IR-46 is completed pre-crime as more information comes to light.

1.10 GENERIC OR SPECIFIC TO IDEOLOGY?

Specific to Islamic radicalisation only.

1.11 THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

The theoretical basis for the model was the staircase to terrorism: Moghaddam (2005), but reviews of the performance of the model identified outcomes that didn't fit this theory, so the model has been adjusted to accommodate empirical findings, though it still retains the concept of stages to radicalisation.

2. STRUCTURE

2.1 AN OUTLINE OF THE STRUCTURE

Two axes:

- 1) Ideology indicators (26)
- 2) Social Context indicators (20)

The two axes work in parallel. Depending on the individual case, ideology related indicators are more prominent than social context indicators, or vice versa. More information might lead to scoring more indicators, but more indicators do not automatically sum to a higher degree of radicalisation. The indicators relate either to phase or degree of radicalisation.

2.2 ARE PROTECTIVE FACTORS INCLUDED?

Protective factors are included and unlimited in the model.

2.3 IS THE FRAMEWORK SENSITIVE TO POLITICAL CONTEXT?

The framework is only concerned with Islamist offending but does not specifically refer to political context.

2.4 RISK SEEN AS STATIC OR DYNAMIC?

All indicators are dynamic and capable of change over time. The model does not predict, but assesses the current risk (as is). By repeating or updating the assessment the dynamics, 'trends' or developments come to light.

2.5 TIME-FRAME FOR RISK JUDGMENTS

The tool is not meant to be used 'one time, stand-alone', but should be part of an ongoing multi-disciplinary approach to monitoring and corrective action.

2.6 ANY REFERENCE TO IMMINENCE OF HARM? ANY RED FLAGS?

This is contained within the identification of the phase of the terrorist trajectory that the individual has reached. The focus pre-crime is on evidence of intentions and capabilities and the phase the individual has reached on a terrorist trajectory. The final phase is coded red in that it reflects a willingness/ readiness to use violence.

2.7 INFORMATION REQUIREMENT

The framework is used pre-crime in real time and necessarily operates with less information than is available post-crime. As more information becomes available over time from different agencies the risk picture can change, but this is real time snap shot information and not processed information that

allows theorised sense to be made of the individual's psychology and motives. Conclusions about emerging risk are made with agreement from all the agencies involved as new information becomes available.

2.8 IS SCENARIO PLANNING INCLUDED?

Not in the pre-crime context. It is up to the assessor to judge what actions should or should not be taken.

2.9 OUTPUT – RISK BANDING OR LIVE RISK/THREAT MANAGEMENT ADVICE?

IR-46 output outcome:

	Ideology (intentions)	Social Context (capabilities)
Phases	Jihad/Extremism (willingness/readiness to use)	
	Jihadization (accepting the use of violence)	
	Social estrangement/Social (willingness/readiness to use)	
	Preliminary Phase	

An overview and professional analysis is provided of the evidence for the judgment (in terms of the presence/absence of information) and reported to multi-agency meetings in the community, consisting of:

1. Internal/organisational directed advice:
 - a. clarifies what is unknown (blank spot) so the user(s) can focus on what needs to be collected.
 - b. clarifies inconsistencies in behaviour or statements to different agencies (police, council, probation service) so each agency has the whole picture going forward.
2. External/subject focussed advice: helps identify the 'main source of the subject's radicalisation (e.g., group/peer-relations, criminality (drugs, criminal past etc) or lack of opportunities/alternatives).

B.1 IS PRACTICE GUIDANCE PROVIDED?

Guidelines are provided with the training

3. TRAINING & LICENSING

3.1 THE CONTENT OF TRAINING

Half day training:

1. Background of the model based knowledge approach and specifically the origin of IR-46.
2. Principles and drawback of the model as part of SPJ.
3. Literature studies, expert meetings, theoretical model.
4. The examined case studies and analyses.
5. Comparison with other models.
6. Current model and the indicators.
7. Toolbox: excel tool, guidelines, info-graph, folders, instruction video.
8. How to use the guidelines and the info-graph in combination with the excel tool.
9. Examples: how to use the tool and the outcome.
10. Interpretation of possible outcomes and the limitations.
11. Practice with case examples in small groups.
12. Discussion in full group.

3.2 OPTIMISED TO WHAT KIND OF ASSESSOR(S)? ESSENTIAL

Practitioners within police, intelligence services, probation/prison service, who on a regular basis have to analyse information on relevance, assess risks or threats or report on individuals. Must be experienced with full access to the highest level of information. Assessors and case-managers from public prosecution, mental health, youth protection and probation services have been trained and are using the IR-46.

DESIRABLE

Analytical skills.

3.3 LICENSING

There is not a formal licence necessary (yet). Though we strongly advise against the use of IR-46 without the proper training.

4. UTILITY & ETHICAL PRACTICE

4.1 IS THE FRAMEWORK UNDERSTOOD BY STAKEHOLDERS AND ACCESSIBLE TO THEM?

There are two versions of the model and its products:

1. Police (confidential).
 2. Partners within the multi-agency meetings.
-

4.2 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Within the Dutch police it was decided that for every suspected radicalised person an IR46 would be undertaken. The assessment takes place within a policing framework and individual rights are not specifically considered.

5. PUBLICATION HISTORY

5.1 PUBLICATIONS THAT BEAR ON INTER-RATER RELIABILITY

Not known.

5.2 PUBLICATIONS THAT BEAR ON VALIDITY

Not known.

5.3 FOLLOW UP STUDIES USING THE FRAMEWORK

Elzinga, P., Poelmans, J., et al. (2010) Terrorist Threat Assessment with Formal Concept Analysis.

Published in: 2010 IEEE International Conference on Intelligence and Security Informatics. Date Added to IEEE Xplore: 14 June 2010.

6. SUMMARY & EVALUATION

6.1 STRENGTHS

- Strong utility for law enforcement staff policing the risk of radicalisation in the community and other agencies charged with managing this risk.
 - Developed from the literature, triangulated with (group) interviews with academic and professional experts (police, intelligence services, public prosecution, city council, mental health etc.) and the pathways of known cases.
 - Meaningful to stakeholders, is not complex and had good face validity.
 - Structures multi-agency management of risk in the community and closes information gaps, preventing terrorist violence by early intervention, proportionate policing and effective information sharing.
 - Assesses radicalisation separately from intent and capability, supporting proportionate management and avoiding over-zealous policing that has the potential to be counter-productive.
 - A theoretical model was developed and tested on three occasions and on 240 cases in total (of known Islamist radicalised individuals). Extensive analysis of data underpins the model, but is not available in the public domain.
 - Ongoing monitoring and review ensure that practice continues to develop as the shape of the risk shifts into a different form.
-

6.2 LIMITATIONS

- Limited to the assessment of Islamist extremist offending.
- Designed for pre-crime assessment only and does not therefore include the offender in the assessment process.
- Assumes a radicalisation trajectory over time, though this is often not the case with those from a criminal background who, from recent evidence, are recruited within short timescales.

- Information about reliability and validity not known.
- The framework not published, so no cross validation work against other frameworks has yet been possible.

IDENTIFYING VULNERABLE PEOPLE (IVP)

1. PROVENANCE

1.1 ORIGINATING AUTHORS, PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION, ROLE AND CONTEXT

University of Liverpool:

Professor Jonathon Cole, *Reader in Psychological Sciences*

Ben Cole, *PhD, Dept. of Psychological Sciences*

Professor Laurence Alison, *Chair in Forensic Psychology*

Emily Alison, *Dept. of Psychological Sciences*

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1.2 DESCRIPTION OF APPROACH

Developed as a checklist based screening instrument, though now conceived of as a Structured Professional Judgment tool.

1.3 BACKGROUND AND PROVENANCE

Items derived from a literature review and research into the open source background material on convicted violent extremists.

1.4 DATE OF FIRST PUBLICATION OR ORIGIN AND SCOPE OF USE

Developed in 2008, in use since 2010.

As the IVP is freely available on the internet it is not known who has officially adopted it.

The originator has spoken to numerous individuals in the UK, USA, and Canada who have discussed their use of the IVP.

1.5 HAS THE FRAMEWORK BEEN PEER REVIEWED?

During the development of the IVP there were many stakeholder meetings and peer reviews.

1.6 AIMS OF THE FRAMEWORK

To facilitate decision making among frontline practitioners around the proportionate initiation of employers' safeguarding procedures, now replaced by the Prevent Duty.

1.7 TARGET POPULATION

Pre-crime. Any individual about whom there are radicalisation concerns in the community.

1.8 FOCUS OF THE ASSESSMENT

Vulnerability of recruitment to violent extremism.

1.9 DIRECT OR INDIRECT ASSESSMENT?

Direct, in that the tool is intended for use by public sector employees, such as a health professional or teacher to determine whether there is cause for concern about an individual's potential radicalisation.

1.10 GENERIC OR SPECIFIC TO IDEOLOGY?

Generic, though indicators 1, 4, 10, 11, 15, and 16 are more relevant to Islamist extremism.

1.11 THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

The framework is predicated on rational choice theory, that individual actors are rational agents who take account of available information, probabilities of events, and potential costs and benefits in determining their preferences, and act consistently in choosing a self-determined best choice of action.

2. STRUCTURE

2.1 AN OUTLINE OF THE STRUCTURE

Generic risk indicators:

1. Cultural and/or religious isolation
2. Isolation from family
3. Risk taking behaviours
4. Sudden change in religious practice
5. Violent rhetoric
6. Negative peer influences
7. Isolated peer group
8. Hate Rhetoric
9. Political activism
10. Basic paramilitary training
11. Travel/Residence abroad

Red Flag indicators:

1. Death rhetoric
2. Member of an extremist group
3. Contact with known recruiters/extremists
4. Advanced paramilitary training
5. Overseas combat

2.2 ARE PROTECTIVE FACTORS INCLUDED?

NA.

2.3 IS THE FRAMEWORK SENSITIVE TO POLITICAL CONTEXT?

No specific reference to this.

2.4 RISK SEEN AS STATIC OR DYNAMIC?

Dynamic.

2.5 TIME-FRAME FOR RISK JUDGMENTS

The assessment informs a one-off referral after which the risk is managed by other public sector agencies.

2.6 ANY REFERENCE TO IMMINENCE OF HARM? ANY RED FLAGS?

Yes, Red Flag indicators are an explicit part of the framework.

2.7 INFORMATION REQUIREMENT

Professional contact between a public sector professional such as a teacher or doctor, and an individual about whom there are radicalisation concerns.

2.8 IS SCENARIO PLANNING INCLUDED?

NA

2.9 OUTPUT – RISK BANDING OR LIVE RISK/THREAT MANAGEMENT ADVICE?

Not relevant as the IVP is essentially a screening tool.

2.10 IS PRACTICE GUIDANCE PROVIDED?

Online guidance:

http://www.safecampuscommunities.ac.uk/uploads/editor/files/IVP_Guidance_Draft_v0.3_web_version.pdf

IDENTIFYING VULNERABLE PEOPLE (IVP)

TRAINING AND LICENSING

3. TRAINING AND LICENSING

3.1 THE CONTENT OF TRAINING

A four-part e-learning package was developed in 2010 but never utilised. Practitioners use it without receiving formal training from the originators. Unknown if organisations are training their employees in its use. Anecdotal evidence suggests that they are.

3.2 OPTIMISED TO WHAT KIND OF ASSESSOR(S)?

All public sector employees from primary school through to prisons, more recently described as all those who have a 'Prevent duty' under The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

3.3 LICENSING

Not required.

4. UTILITY & ETHICAL PRACTICE

4.1 IS THE FRAMEWORK UNDERSTOOD BY STAKEHOLDERS AND ACCESSIBLE TO THEM?

Good face validity; high level of interest from UK, USA, Canada and renewed interest since the public sector Prevent Duty in the UK (Counter-Terrorism & Security Act, 2015).

4.2 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Not explicit.

5. PUBLICATION HISTORY

5.1 PUBLICATIONS

Cole, J., Cole, B., Alison, E., & Alison, L. (2010). Preventing Violent Extremism: Identifying Risk Factors in Vulnerable People. *Jane's Intelligence Review*.

Cole, J., Cole, B., Alison, E., & Alison, A. (2010). Free Radicals: Stopping extremists before they start. *Jane's Intelligence Review*, 22(10), 18-21.

http://www.safecampuscommunities.ac.uk/uploads/editor/files/IVP_Guidance_Draft_v0.3_web_version.pdf

5.2 PUBLICATIONS THAT BEAR ON INTER-RATER RELIABILITY

Egan, V., Cole, J., Cole, B., Alison, L., Alison, E., Waring, S. & Elntib, S. (2016) Can you identify violent extremists using a screening checklist and open-source intelligence alone? *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, 3 (1). pp. 21-36. ISSN 2169-4850. This study examined whether the IVP items acted as a useful risk screening metric with 182 known violent extremists, using publicly available open source intelligence. The mean kappa for inter-rater reliability was .80 for the 30% of cases with the fullest information.

5.3 PUBLICATIONS THAT BEAR ON VALIDITY

The above study confirmed the principle that predicting the prevalence of a low baseline event (in this case terrorist violence) in a low prevalence setting is not productive. Like other predictive tools for violence the IVP was better at ruling out true negatives than ruling in true positives. Missing information, which is the real context of pre-crime investigation, also reduced predictive utility. The authors conclude that "screening instruments must be followed by a 'human-driven' risk assessment of the individual to optimise judgment of the risk..." The total IVP score was a better predictor than any individual items.

5.4 FOLLOW UP STUDIES USING THE FRAMEWORK

Weyers, J.R. & Cole, J. (2014). Identifying ISIL support populations and persons vulnerable to recruitment: Implications for force protection. In Cabayan, H. & Canna, S. Multi-method assessment of ISIL. Strategic Multilayer Assessment Periodic Publication, Special Operations Command Central Command (pp156-160)

6. SUMMARY & EVALUATION

6.1 STRENGTHS

- Easily accessible on line.
- Face validity and easy to administer.
- Provides a means of structuring concerns and informing possible referral.
- No training or licensing required.
- Empirically grounded and informed by terrorist literature.
- Developed with government stakeholder consultation.

6.2 LIMITATIONS

- Indicators 1, 4, 10, 11, 15, and 16 are more relevant to Islamist extremism, limiting its efficacy with other forms of extremism.
- Developed from features of Al Qaeda inspired extremism (political activism, basic paramilitary training, travel/residence abroad) that are less relevant to ISIS inspired extremism.
- Atheoretical.
- No reference to common co-vulnerabilities of criminality and mental health issues.
- As a checklist, no consideration of protective factors or risk management.
- Does not aspire to be a risk management tool, rather a means of identifying instances of potential Islamist radicalisation in the community.

MULTI-LEVEL GUIDELINES (MLG VERSION 2)

1. PROVENANCE

1.1 ORIGINATING AUTHORS, PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION, ROLE AND CONTEXT

Alana N. Cook, PhD

Registered Psychologist

Cook Psychological Services

Adjunct Faculty, Simon Fraser University

Stephen D. Hart, PhD

Professor, Simon Fraser University

Visiting Professor, University of Bergen

Director and Threat Assessment Specialist, Protect International Risk and Safety Services

P. Randall Kropp, PhD

Registered Psychologist

Forensic Psychologist, British Columbia Forensic Psychiatric Services Commission

Adjunct Faculty, Simon Fraser University

Threat Assessment Specialist, Protect International Risk and Safety Services

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1.2 BACKGROUND AND PROVENANCE

Risk factors were empirically derived from a systematic and comprehensive review of the literature (i.e., Campbell Collaboration style review).

1.3 DATE OF FIRST PUBLICATION AND SCOPE OF USE.

The MLG was first produced in 2013 and evaluated as part of a doctoral thesis in 2014 (see Cook, 2014 below).

It has been in use since then in North America and Europe.

1.4 HAS THE FRAMEWORK BEEN PEER REVIEWED?

The framework was initially developed and validated as part of Dr. Cook's doctoral dissertation and was reviewed by her doctoral dissertation committee in 2014 that included the co-authors, supervisor Dr. Raymond Carrado (criminologist), internal examiner at SFU Dr. Garth Davis (criminologist), and external examiner of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Dr. Mario Scalora (psychologist).

1.5 AIMS OF THE FRAMEWORK

- To provide assessors with comprehensive and systematic guidelines to assess and communicate an individual's risk for group-based violence, including terrorism
- To prevent, not predict violence
- To guide prevention through planning
- Ensure assessors are following best-practice
- To outline basic risk factors to consider without restricting scope or imposing scoring rules
- To allow assessors to monitor change in those being assessed.

1.6 DESCRIPTION OF APPROACH

The MLG is an SPJ guide that follows SPJ guidelines: gather information, determine the presence and relevance of risk factors, develop primary scenarios of violence, develop case management plans and communicate findings. The model is designed to

specify a basic set of empirical and rationally derived risk factors that reflect best practice. It is not an actuarial tool. There are no scoring rules.

1.7 TARGET POPULATION

Pre-crime or post-crime. Individuals (male or female) 14 years or older who are currently a member of or affiliated with a group. Although the MLG assumes that all group types can be assessed under these guidelines based on logical and empirical evidence, future validation of the guidelines will examine if they are applicable to all group types.

Group-based violence (GBV) is defined as *the actual, attempted, or threatened physical injury that is deliberate and non-consensual by an individual whose decisions and behaviour are influenced by a group to which they currently belong or are affiliated with*. Affiliation can include identification without membership of the group (i.e., lone actors). This definition captures all major violence groups identified by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2002)⁴³ such as gangs, terrorists, and organized crime.

The authors recommend the MLG for use in conjunction with other relevant risk assessment tools to evaluate terrorist group-based violence if there are relevant risk factors not captured in the MLG tool present and relevant in the individual case.

1.8 FOCUS OF THE ASSESSMENT

The generic risk of an individual engaging in group-based violence, including terrorist violence.

1.9 DIRECT OR INDIRECT ASSESSMENT?

Either are possible.

1.10 GENERIC OR SPECIFIC TO IDEOLOGY?

Generic to group based violence.

1.11 THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

- Decision theory
- Structured Professional Judgment
- Psychology of the Individual
- Group Dynamics
- Social Psychology

2. STRUCTURE

2.1 AN OUTLINE OF THE STRUCTURE

There are **16 basic risk factors**, with the opportunity for Assessors to consider any additional case-specific factors. The 16 basic risk factors cover four domains: individual, individual-group, group, and group-societal.

Individual risk factors are relatively independent from that of the individual's group membership.

Individual-group factors are how the individual relates to the group (e.g., identity, attitudes, the role in the group).

Group factors are related to the group process and structure.

Group-societal factors are external or peripheral contributions to violence risk (e.g., intergroup threat).

2.2 ARE PROTECTIVE FACTORS INCLUDED?

The 20 basic risk factors do not include protective factors. Assessors are encouraged to consider and include in their formulation and management plans case-specific protective factors that are relevant to the formulation and prevention of violence in the individual case.

2.3 IS THE FRAMEWORK SENSITIVE TO POLITICAL CONTEXT?

Political context, and changes in political context can be captured and conceptualized under the group-societal

⁴³ World Report on violence and health (2002). Geneva: World Health Organisation.

MULTI-LEVEL GUIDELINES (MLG VERSION 2)

TRAINING & LICENSING

domain (i.e., how the group and following from this the individuals risk for violence is impacted by the political context).

2.4 RISK SEEN AS STATIC OR DYNAMIC?

Risk is seen as dynamic. The MLG was developed to be appropriate for measuring change in risk and to operate as a monitoring tool.

2.5 TIME-FRAME FOR RISK JUDGMENTS

Time-frame can be weeks to months. The maximum recommended period before re-assessment is 12 months, as risk is dynamic and changing.

2.6 ANY REFERENCE TO IMMINENCE OF HARM? ANY RED FLAGS?

The MLG does not use any red flags. All risk factors and any case-specific risk factors that are judged to be present and relevant are monitored and managed. One of the summary risk judgments to communicate is any evidence of imminent risk of harm.

2.7 INFORMATION REQUIREMENT

Multimethod multisource information is ideal but direct contact with the assessee is not required, though is encouraged when it is possible and appropriate. Information is required of the individual, the individuals' association with the group, the group in question, and the group within the larger societal context. A Subject Matter Expert on the group to which the person belongs or ascribes to is highly recommended and often involved. Information may be gathered by direct contact, mental health records, corrections records, security information, intelligence, and any other relevant interviews or records.

2.8 IS SCENARIO PLANNING INCLUDED?

As an SPJ tool scenario planning is a fundamental part of the general procedure to generate primary scenarios

of violence that are of concern to the assessor. Scenarios are then used to develop management plans to prevent the scenarios from occurring.

2.9 OUTPUT – RISK BANDING OR LIVE RISK/THREAT MANAGEMENT ADVICE?

Assessors are asked to make several summary risk judgments to communicate in their findings (i.e., case priority, risk of violence, severity of violence, imminence of violence, likely victims) as well as development of management plans focused on monitoring, surveillance, treatment and victim safety planning as appropriate. In addition to group-based violence Assessors are also asked to consider any indications of other violence risk (general violence, sexual violence) or self-harm or suicide that become apparent and would trigger another risk assessment.

2.10 IS PRACTICE GUIDANCE PROVIDED?

A guide book takes assessors through the general procedure (described above) to form opinions and develop plans about violence risk prevention.

3. TRAINING & LICENSING

3.1 THE CONTENT OF TRAINING

Users will not have to complete a specific training program to use the guidelines as training can be accomplished in a variety of ways, such as self-study, supervised use, or attendance at lectures and workshops. Ideally, the assessment is completed in a team with at least one team member being a Subject Matter Expert on the group to which the person belongs or ascribes to. Such an expert could be an analyst, a knowledgeable team member with experience and expertise on the particular group(s), or an external expert consultant. Those interested in workshops can contact Dr. Cook at the above email address.

3.2 OPTIMISED TO WHAT KIND OF ASSESSOR(S)?

Use by criminal justice, security, and mental health professionals working in a variety of contexts where there is risk or contact with those involved in group-based violence.

3.3 LICENSING

The MLG is copyrighted in Canada by the authors, but is an open access tool. It is available for purchase by the general public, and evaluators are not required to complete a specific training program prior to purchase or use of the tool.

4. UTILITY & ETHICAL PRACTICE

4.1 IS THE FRAMEWORK UNDERSTOOD BY STAKEHOLDERS AND ACCESSIBLE TO THEM?

Stakeholders and users were provided the opportunity to provide feedback formally in 2012 and after the first publication in 2014 during two training courses (the MLG manual provides full details on this process, see also Cook, 2014). These professionals represented established threat assessment and terrorism experts, various level of experienced law enforcement, intelligence analysts, and mental health professionals.

This group also included academics and administrators who would not use the tool in practice. The authors also routinely solicit feedback from users to improve the accessibility of the guidelines in updated versions of the manual.

4.2 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The MLG was developed in line with Canadian Psychological Association and American Psychological Association ethical principles.

5. PUBLICATION HISTORY

5.1 PUBLICATIONS THAT BEAR ON INTER-RATER RELIABILITY

Cook, A. N., Hart, S. D., & Kropp, P. R. (2013). *Multi-Level Guidelines for the assessment and management of group-based violence*. Burnaby, Canada: Mental Health, Law, & Policy Institute, Simon Fraser University.

Intra-class coefficients for averaged ratings were 0.81 over the four domains. The Hart et al (2017) comparative study below confirms coefficients of the same order.

5.2 PUBLICATIONS THAT BEAR ON VALIDITY

Cook, A. N. (2014). *Risk assessment and management of group-based violence* (Doctoral Thesis).

Available from: http://summit.sfu.ca/system/files/iritems1/14289/etd8437_ACook.pdf

Cook, A. N. & Hart, S.D. (2014). *Risk/threat assessment and management of group-based violence (including terrorism)*. Internal report for Public Safety Canada.

The first paper provides evidence that the MLG is “*face valid, content valid, legally valid and evidences clinical and practical utility*.” However, further evidence is awaited for concurrent and predictive validity.

5.3 FOLLOW UP STUDIES USING THE FRAMEWORK

Hart, S. D., Cook, A. N., Pressman, D. E., Strang, S., & Lim, Y. L. (2017). A concurrent evaluation of threat assessment tools for the individual assessment of terrorism. *Canadian Network for Research on Terrorism, Security, and Society Working Paper Series*. Available from http://tsas.ca/tsas_library_entry/tsas-wp17-01-a-concurrent-evaluation-of-threat-assessment-tools-for-the-individual-assessment-of-terrorism/. If the link does not take you directly there search under tsas-wp17-01 on the TSAS site.

MULTI-LEVEL GUIDELINES (MLG VERSION 2)

SUMMARY & EVALUATION

In this study concurrent validity was found between the overall summary risk ratings for the MLG and the HCR-20, confirming that those identified to be at risk for terrorist violence are also identified to be at risk within a generic violence framework. This finding does not imply that anyone judged to be at risk for general violence would also be at risk of terrorist violence. Predictably the MLG Individual and Individual-Group domains overlapped significantly with the VERA2 whereas the Group and Group-Society domains overlapped very little, confirming that the two frameworks are measuring different aspects of group based violence.

6. SUMMARY & EVALUATION

6.1 STRENGTHS

- The MLG was developed from a Campbell Collaboration style review that included book chapters and theoretical papers due to the shortage of empirical papers in the field of group violence.
- Empirical grounding was provided by subject matter experts in terrorism, gangs, cults and organised crime from a social science background and from different countries, who reviewed the first draft of the guidelines for utility and comprehension. Practitioners in threat assessment and terrorism, law enforcement, intelligence analysts, and mental health professionals participated in the first training and live practice with the framework.
- The framework is informed by Decision theory, Psychology of the Individual, Group Dynamics, Social Psychology.
- SPJ structure is fully deployed, from the systematic assessment of presence and relevance of risk factors through summary risk ratings to scenario planning.
- Explicitly considers the individual in their social and wider societal/political context.
- Addresses the group affiliation that often accompanies identification with a shared group, cause or ideology.
- Has potential use with gangs, terrorists and organized criminals.

- Scenario planning provides a firm foundation for risk management.
- The Individual-Group and Group-Societal factors have demonstrated relevance even with lone actor terrorists as their belief system is often defined by their opposition to society and perceived social or political injustice.
- The structure is lean and easily understood by users and stakeholders.
- Strong inter-rater reliability was established during its construction.

6.2 LIMITATIONS

- Because of the leanness of the framework users need to be experienced risk assessors to evaluate the significance of the information.
- Factors in the Individual domain are general and may lack the specificity required for a detailed terrorist assessment, which is particularly the case for lone actors with idiosyncratic motivation.
- The Individual domain also lacks sufficient detail to assess general violence, which is a feature in the backgrounds of many terrorist offenders. For this reason the authors recommend that an HCR-20 is also undertaken for terrorist offenders with previous non-terrorist violence.
- There is some evidence that the MLG may not flag up risk of terrorist pathway offences that fall short of terrorist violence, and the additional use of the HCR-20 is recommended by the authors.

TERRORIST RADICALIZATION ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL (TRAP-18)

1. PROVENANCE

1.1 ORIGINATING AUTHORS, PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION, ROLE AND CONTEXT

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Forensic Psychologist

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Consultant, FBI Behavioral Analysis Unit, Quantico.

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1.2 BACKGROUND AND PROVENANCE

Primarily empirical through study of literature on lone actor terrorists over fifteen years, the author's own practice experience, and current research. The TRAP-18 warning behaviours are derived from the pre-attack signals identified in the targeted violence literature on lone perpetrators of mass killings, assassinations, spousal homicide and terrorist attacks. The distal background factors are the theorised features of the mind-set of a lone actor 'violent true believer' that create their vulnerability to targeted violence.

The TRAP-18 is a proprietary instrument which is owned, copyrighted and trademarked in the US by Dr. Meloy. The TRAP-18 is licensed to Multihealth Systems, Inc., for distribution and sale (mhs.com).

1.3 DATE OF FIRST PUBLICATION OR ORIGIN AND SCOPE OF USE.

As TRAP-18 in *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, 2015, 2:140-152;

Proximal warning behaviours first appeared in 2011 in several peer reviewed publications.

Distal characteristics were first published in 2014 (Meloy, R., & Yakeley, J. (2014). The violent true believer as a lone wolf– psychoanalytic perspectives on terrorism. *Behavioural Sciences & the Law*, 32(3), 327-365).

TRAP-18 has been in use since 2015 by various counterterrorism analysts and investigators in Canada, US, and Europe. It is not sanctioned or officially adopted by any government or agency.

1.4 HAS THE FRAMEWORK BEEN PEER REVIEWED?

See below.

1.5 AIMS OF THE FRAMEWORK

- To help the threat assessor prioritize cases based upon imminence of risk: the presence of a cluster of distal characteristics indicates that the case should be continuously monitored; the presence of any one proximal warning behaviour indicates that the case should be more actively managed. The term proximal is used in a temporal sense, and we use a meteorological analogy (Monahan & Steadman, 1996) concerning violence: Watch vs. Warn.
- To identify the pattern within the proximal warning behaviours, capitalizing on the findings of gestalt psychology (Wertheimer, 1938) that we naturally see patterns, allowing the assessor to see the larger picture and not just focus upon one discrete variable.
- To help prioritise cases and assign resources in a rational manner (a major unaddressed problem throughout the CT community).

TERRORIST RADICALIZATION ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL (TRAP-18)

STRUCTURE

1.6 DESCRIPTION OF APPROACH

The TRAP-18 is a structured professional judgment (SPJ) instrument, not an actuarial measure. Factors are coded rather than scored, and the weighting of the various indicators is left to the assessor, as well as the final assignment of the case to a category of monitoring or active management. The focus of the instrument is upon prevention rather than prediction. The manual for the TRAP-18 contains questions to help the assessor develop a narrative for understanding the case given the presence or absence of indicators and other idiosyncratic circumstances that might apply in the individual case.

1.7 TARGET POPULATION

Pre-crime: Target population are persons of concern (POC) for engagement in ideologically-motivated violence who have been identified by counter-terrorism and other law enforcement officials.

1.8 FOCUS OF THE ASSESSMENT

Threat of committing an act of ideologically motivated and intended (targeted) violence toward a person or persons.

The TRAP-18 is primarily focused on the lone actor terrorist, and not group actor terrorists, although it has been shown to be useful in the analysis of autonomous cells in Europe in one study.

1.9 DIRECT OR INDIRECT ASSESSMENT?

A direct interview is very helpful for additional information, but in a pre-crime scenario may not be possible, necessary or wise.

1.10 GENERIC OR SPECIFIC TO IDEOLOGY?

Generic: Commonality across ideologies demonstrated empirically in Meloy, J.R. & Gill, P. (2016). The lone actor terrorist and the TRAP-18. *J of Threat Assessment and Management* 3: 37-52 in which equivalence was shown across 78% of indicators comparing jihadists,

right wing extremists, and single issue terrorists from Europe and the US.

1.11 THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

The TRAP-18 is informed by:

- Gestalt psychology
- Theory and research on targeted violence
- Psychoanalytic (object relations) theory
- Attachment theory
- Aspects of social psychology
- Psychobiological foundations of predatory violence

(See two foundational papers below by Meloy, Hoffmann, Guldemann & James (2012) and Meloy & Yakeley (2014)).

2. STRUCTURE

2.1 AN OUTLINE OF THE STRUCTURE

Two clusters

1. Proximal warning behaviours (8)
2. Distal characteristics (10)

Indicators are coded as present, absent, or insufficient information.

2.2 ARE PROTECTIVE FACTORS INCLUDED?

Although protective factors are not formally included, the absence of certain indicators, both proximal warning behaviours and distal characteristics are protective. The narrative questions also explicitly ask about protective factors that may be present in the individual case.

2.3 IS THE FRAMEWORK SENSITIVE TO POLITICAL CONTEXT?

The TRAP-18 is sensitive to changing political contexts and situations in relation to fixation and identification among the warning behaviours, and the joining of

personal grievance and moral outrage in the distal characteristics.

2.4 RISK SEEN AS STATIC OR DYNAMIC?

All the proximal warning behaviours are dynamic. Reassessment is recommended due to the dynamic nature of short term risk and the need to prioritise cases.

Several distal characteristics are static (eg, history of criminal violence and history of mental disorder).

2.5 TIME-FRAME FOR RISK JUDGMENTS

The time frame is short term (days, weeks, months), and most of the indicators are dynamic, meaning they can change over time.

2.6 ANY REFERENCE TO IMMINENCE OF HARM? ANY RED FLAGS?

The proximal factors are warning behaviours that concern leakage of an intent to offend. The presence of any one of these should result in active management of the case.

2.7 INFORMATION REQUIREMENT

The most reliable and valid assessment of a case utilising the TRAP-18 will have three sources of data:

- A direct interview (clinical or nonclinical, and may or may not utilize psychometric testing),
- Collateral interviews of those who currently know the person of concern and his behaviour, and
- Public records available on the person, including law enforcement and national security sources if available.

2.8 IS SCENARIO PLANNING INCLUDED?

Scenario planning is an explicit formulation question among the narrative questions in the instrument. This is based upon the work of Hart and Kropp.

2.9 OUTPUT – RISK BANDING OR LIVE RISK/THREAT MANAGEMENT ADVICE?

The TRAP-18 does not band at a level of risk since there is no empirical research to support this for any instrument (since there are virtually no comparative studies). Cases are prioritized for active risk management or monitoring so that time and personnel efficiencies can be maximized.

The TRAP-18 does not provide explicit risk management advice, but the narrative questions included in the codebook ask specific questions about risk management for the assessor to answer.

2.10 IS PRACTICE GUIDANCE PROVIDED?

A codebook guides assessors' decisions about each factor.

3. TRAINING & LICENSING

3.1 THE CONTENT OF TRAINING

Training is provided by Dr. Meloy and his associates in several ways: through live training sessions and on demand online. The training is 6-7 hours in person or online. The method of training is through lecture, group discussion, and assessment of actual cases using the TRAP-18, examples of cases which illustrate each and every indicator, videotapes, and handouts. The content of the training involves a conceptual overview of the instrument, its origins, research basis, and its purpose. The training then moves to a detailed description of each indicator with an illustrative case. The current reliability and validity research is then reviewed, critiqued, and directions for further research are outlined. There follows an in depth analysis using the TRAP-18 of two individual terrorism cases in the

TERRORIST RADICALIZATION ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL (TRAP-18)

UTILITY & ETHICAL PRACTICE

US: the Timothy McVeigh case (ethnic nationalist) and the Malik Hasan case (jihadist).

3.2 OPTIMISED TO WHAT KIND OF ASSESSOR(S)?

The training is designed for threat assessment professionals, including mental health clinicians, law enforcement officers, intelligence analysts, counterterrorism investigators, and others with specific case load or supervisory responsibilities. It is not designed for the public. It is specifically tailored to maximize learning and use for practical application in the field.

User feedback suggests that the TRAP-18 proximal factors are very easy to use by those with a basic knowledge of psychology, crime/criminology, but that more clinical expertise is necessary to interpret the distal factors.

3.3 LICENSING

The TRAP-18 is copyrighted and trademarked in the US by Dr. Meloy, and solely licensed to Multi-health Systems, Inc., for worldwide marketing and distribution.

4. UTILITY & ETHICAL PRACTICE

4.1 IS THE FRAMEWORK UNDERSTOOD BY STAKEHOLDERS AND ACCESSIBLE TO THEM?

Feedback to the developer from stakeholders within the national security community in Canada, US, and several countries in Europe indicates that it is; the TRAP-18 is accessible as outlined above, and through scholarly publications.

4.2 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

APA ethical principles have informed the development of the TRAP-18; and the instrument, due to its generalizability, is free from some forms of bias such as targeting of certain ethnic or religious groups. The proximal warning behaviours in particular help

with balancing rights of the individual against the state because the focus is upon specific patterns of behaviour and not any demographic characteristics or profiling. The proximal warning behaviours help narrow any investigative efforts to persons of concern who are *currently* engaging in behaviours that warrant investigation given the extant research on lone actor terrorists and also targeted violence in general.

5. PUBLICATION HISTORY

5.1 FIRST PUBLICATIONS THAT BEAR ON INTER-RATER RELIABILITY

In a study independent of the developers, interrater reliability demonstrated by Challacombe and Lucas (2018) in a comparative study of Sovereign Citizens was 0.76 (kappa).

5.2 FIRST PUBLICATIONS THAT BEAR ON VALIDITY

Hoffmann, J., Meloy, J.R., Guldemann, A. & Ermer, A. (2011). Attacks on German public figures, 1968-2004: Warning behaviors, potentially lethal and nonlethal acts, psychiatric status, and motivations. *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*, 29, 155-179.

5.3 FOLLOW UP STUDIES USING THE FRAMEWORK

Meloy, J.R., & O'Toole, M.E. (2011). The concept of leakage in threat assessment. *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*, 29, 513-520.

Hoffmann, J., Meloy, J.R., Guldemann, A. & Ermer, A. (2011). Attacks on German public figures, 1968-2004: Warning behaviors, potentially lethal and nonlethal acts, psychiatric status, and motivations. *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*, 29, 155-179.

Meloy, J.R., Hoffmann, J., Guldemann, A. & James, D. (2012). The role of warning behaviors in threat assessment: An exploration and suggested typology. *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*, 30, 256-279.

Meloy, J.R. (2011). Approaching and attacking public figures: a contemporary analysis of communications

and behaviour. In: C. Chauvin, ed., *Threatening Communications and Behavior: perspectives on the pursuit of public figures*. Board on Behavioral, Cognitive, and Sensory Sciences, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, pp. 75-101.

Meloy, J.R., & Yakeley, J. (2014). The violent true believer as a “lone wolf” – psychoanalytic perspectives on terrorism. *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*, 32, 347-365.

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TERRORIST RADICALIZATION ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL (TRAP-18)

SUMMARY & EVALUATION

Goodwill A, Meloy JR. Visualizing the TRAP-18 indicators for terrorist attacks with multidimensional scaling. *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*, in press.

6. SUMMARY & EVALUATION

6.1 STRENGTHS

- Conforms with SPJ recommended structure.
- As such it has the potential to contribute to case prioritisation pre-crime and information analysis, formulation, re-formulation and on-going risk management post-crime by application of the proximal factors and distal factors separately.
- Proximal factors very easy to use by those with a basic knowledge of psychology/criminology.
- Acts as a screening method pre-crime for assigning to either active management or monitoring.
- Informed by clinical understanding of the psychology of grievance fuelled violence, personality disorder, insecure attachment, mental health problems and fixated and delusional beliefs.
- Some distal factors are based on psychoanalytic theory providing clinical understanding to inform risk assessment and intervention, and potentially structure research that is able to build the knowledge base.
- Studies specifically suggest a relationship between the lethality of the violence and the degree of psychopathology of the perpetrator, underscoring the importance of understanding the psychopathology.
- A growing number of postdictive studies are building evidence for the efficacy of the framework as an effective retrospective predictor of ideologically motivated violence.
- Supports risk management and prevention, with the potential to discriminate between empty threats and real threats.
- User feedback is that realistically, in a pre-crime scenario neither a direct interview, nor psychometrics, nor complete information are available for a complete TRAP-18 assessment that was built initially from a rich source of post-crime information.
- The psycho-analytic explanation for some of the distal factors is hard to validate, and appears esoteric to some. Clinical expertise is required to make sense of them.
- There may be a danger from the foundational focus on lone actors that group actor extremist violence might be over-pathologised with the TRAP-18, when the evidence suggests that fewer group actors than lone actors have mental health problems.
- TRAP-18 needs more comparative and postdictive research by independent researchers.

6.2 LIMITATIONS

- The focus on lone actors means that there are no references to group influences in the framework, potentially limiting its utility with group actors.

VIOLENT EXTREMISM RISK ASSESSMENT VERSION 2 REVISED (VERA-2R)

1. PROVENANCE

1.1 ORIGINATING AUTHORS, PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION, ROLE AND CONTEXT

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1.2 BACKGROUND AND PROVENANCE

The indicators of the first VERA were based on the existing literature of violent extremism. It was constructed within the structured professional judgment (SPJ) methodology (Pressman, 2009).⁴⁴ Following consultation with terrorism experts, national security analysts, law enforcement analysts, and professionals trialling it with convicted terrorists in a high security prison, revisions were made. This revised version was identified as the VERA-2 (Pressman & Flockton, 2012).⁴⁵ The current VERA-2R, 2018 version, is an

updated and improved version of the VERA-2 and the VERA-2R 2016.

The VERA-2R includes three additional motivational indicators which have been identified as relevant to radicalisation to violence and are applicable to men, women and young people. It also includes 11 additional indicators related to non-violent criminal history, personal history and mental disorders. These additional evidenced based indicators have been identified as potential indicators for violent extremism. This version has become more user-friendly; indicators have been defined more clearly and consistently, and are better explained. Translations are available in Dutch, German and French languages in addition to the English version. Finnish and Swedish language translations are forthcoming.

1.3 DATE OF FIRST PUBLICATION OR ORIGIN AND SCOPE OF USE.

The original VERA upon which the VERA-2R is based, and which is the updated and improved version, was first published in 2009 in Canada (see footnote 1)

The VERA-2R is in use in Europe, North America, Australia and South-East Asia in a broad range of settings and by various types of experts. About 1200 professionals have been trained. In Europe about 600 judicial professionals have been trained (Netherlands, France, Belgium, Finland, Sweden, Germany, Austria, Denmark, and England) with presentations, manuals and training examples in English, Dutch, German, and French. The VERA-2R has been implemented in the Netherlands since 2015 with 150 professionals trained for different judicial settings.

⁴⁴ Pressman, D.E. (2009). *Risk Assessment Decisions for Violent Political Extremism 2009-02*. Public Safety Canada, Government of Canada, Ottawa, Cat. No. PS3-1/2009-2-1EPDF; Available: <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/2009-02-rdv/2009-02-rdv-eng.pdf>
⁴⁵ Pressman, D.E. & Flockton, J.S. (2012). *Calibrating risk of violent political extremists and terrorists: The VERA-2 structured assessment*. *The British Journal of Forensic Practice*, 14 (4), 237-251.

1.4 HAS THE FRAMEWORK BEEN PEER REVIEWED?

The VERA-2R has been continually improved by feedback from terrorism experts, national security analysts, law enforcement analysts, forensic psychiatrists and psychologists, and other professionals using the VERA, VERA2, and VERA-2R. The criteria for indicators set out in the VERA-2R have been carefully considered and researched. The publications in journals and book chapters identifying the VERA framework have all been peer-reviewed.

1.5 AIMS OF THE FRAMEWORK

- The VERA-2R provides a structure for the analysis of the individual's risk of violent extremism, based on the person's:
 - beliefs, attitudes and ideology; social context and intention; history, action and capacity, and the commitment and motivation of the person,
 - protective and risk-mitigating indicators, and
 - relevant criminal and personal history and potential mental disorders.
 - The VERA-2R enables the identification of risk scenarios with objectives for interventions and risk management
 - The VERA-2R enables violent extremism risk monitoring and supervision of persons with risk assessments, repeated over time to determine changes in risk and protective indicators
-

1.6 DESCRIPTION OF APPROACH

The VERA-2R is based on the structured professional judgment approach (SPJ). The 34 indicators of the VERA-2R domains have their scientific base explained and have well described criteria for three levels of rating (low, moderate, high). For each indicator extra explanation is added with lead questions and extra information in bullets. This is also provided for the 11 additional indicators.

In this way a more objective assessment is possible. This objectivity supports consensus discussions in cases where more than one professional is involved in assessment or management. The final professional judgment of the assessor is based on the weighting of all available information and data related to the risk and protective indicators. The final judgment is not made based on a numerical overall score. Counting the indicators to arrive at a sum is not consistent with the structured professional judgment methodology of the VERA-2R. Different risk scenarios can be considered and risk management planning for each of these scenarios may be undertaken (Hart & Logan, 2011; ⁴⁶Douglas et al., 2013).⁴⁷

1.7 TARGET POPULATION

- The VERA-2R can be used for all types of violent extremists, terrorists and violent offenders motivated by religious, political or social ideologies, pre-crime or post-crime and in any judicial setting (prison, forensic mental health, prosecution, in court, probation, police, intelligence, exit facilities or other). It can inform risk assessment, risk management and risk decision making including, intervention, to track progress or to inform management plans for discharge.
 - The VERA-2R includes six domains, and is improved with up to date evidence for each indicator. The sixth domain contains 11 additional indicators related to criminal history, personal history, and mental disorders.
 - The VERA-2R is appropriate for youths as well as for male and female adults. It has been used with aspiring and returning foreign terrorist fighters and their returning families in addition to the other target groups identified above.
-

1.8 FOCUS OF THE ASSESSMENT

The VERA-2R is aimed specifically at assessing an individual's risk of violent extremism related beliefs, attitudes and ideology; social context and intention; history, action and capacity, and the commitment

⁴⁶ Hart, S.D. & Logan, C. (2011). *Formulation of violence risk using evidence based assessments: The Structured Professional Judgment approach*. In P. Sturmey & M. McMurrin (Eds.), *Forensic case formulation* (pp. 83-106). Chichester, UK: Wiley Blackwell.

⁴⁷ Douglas, K.S., Hart, S.D., Webster, C.D., & Belfrage, H. (2013). *HCR-20: Assessing risk for violence* (3rd ed.). Vancouver, BC: Mental Health, Law and Policy Institute, Simon Fraser University.

and motivation of the person. The focus is also to identify any relevant criminal and personal history and presenting mental disorders of the individual being assessed. It enables risk scenario planning, the charting of risk pathways with baseline measures and successive measurements repeated over time to determine changes in risk and protective indicators. It is applicable both to lone actors and to members of extremist groups.

1.9 DIRECT OR INDIRECT ASSESSMENT?

Both are possible.

1.10 GENERIC OR SPECIFIC TO IDEOLOGY?

The VERA-2R is generic and can be used across the spectrum of extremist ideologies.

1.11 THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

The 34 indicators and 11 additional indicators of the VERA-2R 2018 are based on the literature on violent extremism and terrorism related to lone actor terrorism (Gill, 2015), violent extremism and terrorist groups, suicide terrorism (Lankford, 2014a, 2014b, 2016, 2018), moral disengagement (Bandura, 1990, 2016). Some of the original items were derived from Saucier et al (2009),⁴⁸ Sageman (2004),⁴⁹ Kruglanski et al (2009).⁵⁰ Other mainstream research related to engagement and disengagement and group factors is also included, and literature related to mental disorders of lone actors.

2. STRUCTURE

2.1 AN OUTLINE OF THE STRUCTURE

The VERA-2R indicators have a scientific base that is explained in the manual with well described criteria for three levels of rating (low, moderate, high). For each indicator extra explanation is added with lead questions and extra information in bullets. This provides a

more objective assessment. This objectivity supports consensus discussions in cases where more than one professional is involved in assessment or management.

Protective and risk mitigating indicators are scored in reverse. A low rating indicates no change, a moderate rating indicates some positive shift and a high rating indicates a significant change in a positive, protective direction and towards risk mitigation. The final professional judgment of the assessor is based on the weighting of all available information and data related to the risk and protective indicators. Summing the indicators is not consistent with the SPJ methodology.

The VERA-2R has five domains with 34 indicators and three additional domains with 11 indicators.

1. Domain beliefs, attitudes, and ideology (7). This domain is of essential importance in identifying the nature of the extremism and the support for the use of violence to further ideological goals. It contains indicators such as grievances and perceived injustice, identification of the causes or persons responsible for grievances and, moral emotions, alienation, the relationship of the individual to the laws and norms of the state, and in-group affiliation.
2. History, Action and Capacity (6). This domain is relevant to an individual's ability to plan and carry out a violent extremist attack. This can include a criminal or violent past, specialized training the individual has received, access to the necessary persons to facilitate a violent extremist action and resources and materials. Recent events have shown that a dedicated person may only require everyday possessions such as a car or a knife to carry out a successful violent extremist attack leading to death. Nonetheless, specific training with explosives, extremist indoctrination and previous criminal behaviour remain salient to the identification of the skills and capacity a person has available to facilitate violent extremist action.
3. Commitment and Motivation (8). This domain identifies eight possible individual motivations or

⁴⁸ Saucier, G., Aker, L.G., Shen-Miller, G et al (2009). *Patterns of thinking in militant extremism. Perspectives on Psychological Science*. 4(3): 256-271

⁴⁹ Sageman, M. (2004) *Understanding Terrorist Networks*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

⁵⁰ Kruglanski, A.W., Chen, X., Dechesne, M., et al (2009). *Fully committed: suicide Bombers' motivation and the quest for personal significance. Political Psychology*. 30(3): 331-357.

STRUCTURE

indicators that have been identified as drivers of violent extremism. Such motivations are important for planning intervention programs and for understanding the individual's risk and threat level. An individual may be motivated, for example, by adventure and excitement, and at the same time believe that there is a moral obligation to act, and a need to belong to a group. A criminal opportunist may have little or no ideological commitment to a cause but be driven by financial or other personal gain that can result from engagement. Several different motivating elements may play a role at the same time in pushing an individual to violent extremism.

4. Protective/Risk Mitigating Indicators (6). These indicators are important for identifying positive changes in persons, both at a specific point in time and over a continuum of time. They are important for identifying program objectives and for measuring the results of intervention programs. Disengagement from terrorism might be due to psychological or emotional issues and/or physical external reasons due to imprisonment, 'other role' activity, dismissal or withdrawal from the group, a change of individual priorities or a moderation in ideology or belief.
5. Additional Indicators (11). These indicators in three domains (Criminal history, Personal history, Mental disorder) may impact the risk of individuals engaging in violent extremism and terrorism when in combination with the presence of ideological, contextual, and motivational indicators identified in the VERA-2R. The criminal and personal history factors are particularly relevant to youth. These indicators are rated as 'present' or 'not present'.

2.2 ARE PROTECTIVE FACTORS INCLUDED?

Six generic protective and risk-mitigating factors are identified as protective indicators.

2.3 IS THE FRAMEWORK SENSITIVE TO POLITICAL CONTEXT?

Political views and ideological objectives are considered within the Beliefs, Attitudes, and Ideology domain.

Although there are no specific indicators concerned with the geopolitical context of the assessment, such information should be documented in the qualitative section of each relevant risk indicator. Such background information is considered when the geopolitical context is pertinent to the violent extremism and the risk being assessed.

2.4 RISK SEEN AS STATIC OR DYNAMIC?

Dynamic. The VERA-2R assessment is based on the current status of the individual. Historical indicators are interpreted in terms of the impact that past experiences have had on the individual's current presentation, and assessments are repeated over time to track change.

2.5 TIME-FRAME FOR RISK JUDGMENTS

The time-frame of the VERA-2R is short term, dependent on the judicial setting. The dynamic nature of engagement and/or disengagement necessitates repeated measurements. After each assessment advice is given when and how a new risk assessment will be necessary. After each assessment advice is provided as to when and in which context a new risk assessment should be undertaken.

2.6 ANY REFERENCE TO IMMINENCE OF HARM? ANY RED FLAGS?

This is a judgment made by the assessor. There are no red flag indicators as such, but those concerned with intention, capability and commitment bear directly on risk and threat.

2.7 INFORMATION REQUIREMENT

Risk assessment should be based on the most complete information possible paying attention to credibility, validity, importance, and appropriateness of the information. If there is no direct contact with the individual the assessment can be based on collateral information alone, including surveillance intelligence, legal documents and psychological or psychiatric evaluations.

2.8 IS SCENARIO PLANNING INCLUDED?

This is not specifically included in the English manual, but risk scenario planning is specifically dealt with in the VERA-2R training programs and in the training cases. Also, the information and formats that accompany VERA-2R training programs provide references to risk scenario planning and relevance.

2.9 OUTPUT – RISK BANDING OR LIVE RISK/THREAT MANAGEMENT?

Risk banding and a written narrative final judgment in a VERA-2R report or risk formulation are recommended. This sets out the overall risk assessment (low, moderate or high) together with the significant domains and risk and protective indicators. These are explained and evidenced, and inform risk scenario planning and risk management efforts.

2.10 IS PRACTICE GUIDANCE PROVIDED?

Yes, the VERA-2R manual or official VERA-2R handbook© provides:

1. Explanation of the scientific context of radicalisation, violent extremism and terrorism and the principles of risk assessment.
2. Development of the VERA-2R.
3. Guidelines for using the VERA-2R.
4. Full explanation of the VERA-2R indicators and their evidence base. Reliability and validity are discussed. VERA-2R manuals are provided to those who complete the specified training program.

3. TRAINING & LICENSING

3.1 THE CONTENT OF TRAINING

The VERA-2R training course includes background information and the key knowledge base for the tool, research findings that underpin the tool, additional research needs, definitions related to radicalisation, violent extremism and terrorism and practical aspects

of violent extremism and terrorism related to the law. In addition, the knowledge base of group related, and lone actor violent extremism and the role of mental health problems are included.

The principles of The Structured Professional Judgement (SPJ) methodology and risk communication are explained.

Experience with use and implementation are discussed.

Participants acquire experience in applying the indicators and completing assessments with five or more actual case studies.

After completion of the training participants understand the VERA-2R rating definitions and are able to apply them within the SPJ methodology. They understand the benefits and limitations of the VERA-2R in terms of its application to violent extremists and are able to explain its limitations and advantages.

A follow-up day every year after completion of the training course is advised. This focusses on understanding implementation issues and writing reports with example formats and a training case. Participants leave with more experience of risk assessment in daily practice and an understanding of how to use appropriate risk concepts and descriptions, and how these assessments can be reported.

3.2 OPTIMISED TO WHAT KIND OF ASSESSOR(S)?

Professional staff in key criminal justice and law enforcement agencies (psychologists, psychiatrists, analysts) and by security and intelligence analysts.

It is preferred if assessor(s) have experience in undertaking individual assessments and hold a position in a government agency, security service, international agency or are professionally authorised to conduct risk assessments.

3.3 LICENSING

The VERA-2R has a copyright and a trademark for European countries (NIFP, Dutch Custodial Services, Nils Duits) and for countries outside Europe (D. Elaine

Pressman). Professionals have to follow a specific VERA-2R training course to obtain the manual or official VERA-2R handbook©. They receive a certificate and have access to the extranet environment of the VERA- 2R website.

4. UTILITY & ETHICAL PRACTICE

4.1 IS THE FRAMEWORK UNDERSTOOD BY STAKEHOLDERS AND ACCESSIBLE TO THEM?

The framework has face, content and construct validity as all risk indicators and risk domains are directly related to violent extremism.

A half-day introductory course is available for professionals who are stakeholders in extremism risk-assessments, such as lawyers, public prosecutors and judges, and for senior officials and executives from prison and probation services.

A one-day introductory and interactive course on the VERA-2R is available for frontline workers and professionals who work with violent extremists, such as police officers, teachers, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers in mental health and prison settings, and municipal social workers.

4.2 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The focus of the VERA-2R is on violent extremism, and it cannot be used for other purposes. Users must be familiar with the research, SPJ methodology, have operational knowledge of violent extremism and use the latest version of the protocol. The VERA-2R can only be used within the specifications and limits described in the training. Users must be able to explain to others what the limitations and advantages of the VERA-2R and SPJ approach are in its application to violent extremists, and be able to write reports explaining and communicating this. For example, the VERA-2R is not a screening instrument that can be applied to the general population.

Written informed consent of the subject may be required, depending on the assessment situation.

5. PUBLICATION HISTORY

5.1 PUBLICATIONS THAT BEAR ON INTER-RATER RELIABILITY

Kappa values for inter-rater agreement within the Beardsley and Beech (2013)⁵¹ study between two independent raters across five terrorist case studies were all >0.76.

5.2 PUBLICATIONS THAT BEAR ON VALIDITY

Pressman, D. E., & Flockton, J. (2014). Violent extremist risk assessment: Issues and applications of the VERA 2 to the high security prison setting. In A. Silke (Ed New York: Routledge. This chapter reports a study about construct validity in which there were statistically significant differences between terrorists and non-terrorist violent offenders on a range of risk tools (VERA-2, LSI-R; the HCR-20, Version 2, Psychopathy Checklist; Screening Version, and the Violence Risk Scale; Screening Version). The terrorist offenders were significantly lower risk than the non-terrorist violence offenders in terms of general violence and criminality, but significantly higher risk for violent extremism as assessed by the VERA 2.

The authors explain its face validity and user-friendliness, deductive validity (the framework measures the elements of the offending that lead to the conviction), construct validity, and content validity (degree to which the indicators reflect the characteristics of violent extremists). With this being the case it would be expected that extremist offenders would score higher on the VERA-2R than non-terrorist offenders.

Beardsley N.L. & Beech A. R. (2013), see footnote 51. Applying the violent extremist risk assessment (VERA) to a sample of terrorist case studies. This study compared the scores of a group of general violence perpetrators with five foreign terrorists on five assessment tools for general violence, and the VERA.

51 Beardsley, N. L. & Beech, A.R. (2013). Applying the violent extremist risk assessment (VERA) to a sample of terrorist case studies. *Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research*, 5 (1) 4- 15.

The VERA performed better in returning higher scores for the terrorists than for the general violent group, and the general violence assessments returned higher scores for the generally violent perpetrators than the terrorists ($p < .01$).

5.3 FOLLOW UP STUDIES USING THE FRAMEWORK

Herzog-Evans, M. (2018). A comparison of two structured professional judgment tools for violent extremism and their relevance in the French context. *European Journal of Probation* 2018, Vol. 10(1) 3–27.

This descriptive study compared the VERA-2 and the ERG22+ for the French probation context with convicted terrorists. The author found overlap in content and intrinsic value between the two frameworks, the main difference being the previous VERA's emphasis on ideology as a motivating factor in contrast to the ERG's emphasis on identity issues as drivers for extremism. The author concluded that both tools have strengths, but that the ERG was more suitable for the assessment of individuals in France where, like the UK, terrorist offenders have not necessarily carried out an act of extremist violence.

The French Ministry of Justice (Direction Administration Penitentiaire; DAP) reviewed risk assessment approaches and chose to implement the VERA-2R in the French prison services. VERA-2R training courses were provided in France to the French National Prison Administration and Training Institution (ENAP).

A European Database of convicted (and deceased) terrorists and their actions has been developed based on judicial documents. The research group is compared with a control group of 'ordinary' convicted violent offenders. The aim of the European Database is to map factors that are related to engagement, continuation and disengagement in terrorist activities. The European Database contains more than 300 indicators about terrorists, motives, risk indicators and VERA-2R indicators, and psychopathology in relation to contextual characteristics, and judicial interventions. The European Database will be filled at the start of 2019. This project is financed by the European Union and has six participating European Member States

(Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Sweden, The Netherlands).

6. SUMMARY & EVALUATION

6.1 STRENGTHS

- Conforms with the SPJ approach
- Has become more empirically informed in its later revisions as the knowledge base has grown
- Is applicable to all ideological types
- The focus on violent extremism gives the VERA-2R strong face, content, and construct validity
- Allows the addition of specific indicators relevant to the individual being assessed
- Provides a rich source of detail for risk assessment and risk management where sufficient information is available to address each indicator
- The criteria are well described criteria and the requirement for detailed information supports objective assessment and consensus discussions where more than one professional is involved in the task.
- Includes some protective/ risk-mitigating indicators
- Good inter-rater reliability has been demonstrated in one small study
- Validity may potentially be tested within the European DARE Database study

6.2 LIMITATIONS

- Not designed to assess terrorist pathway offences that do not include violent action or the support of violent action.
- Items are comprehensive and added to as new indicators come to light. Users say that there is a danger that allowing it to grow results in some loss of clarity
- Each item requires both quantitative rating and qualitative information from as many sources as possible, documented in detail. The time requirement may represent a challenge in some contexts.

SUMMARY & EVALUATION

- The risk level for each of the items is defined either qualitatively or quantitatively, though users have questioned the empirical basis for these definitions and suggest that a professional judgment of low, medium or high is all that is required
- Needs access to classified information that may not be available to clinical or correctional practitioners
- Protective indicators are general risk mitigating and/or disengagement indicators, that do not substitute for individually relevant protective influences
- The authors' claims for content validity (the indicators reflect the characteristics of violent extremists) and deductive validity (the framework measures the elements of the offending that lead to the conviction) need evidencing through empirical studies.

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www.crestresearch.ac.uk



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